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The Life of

George IV



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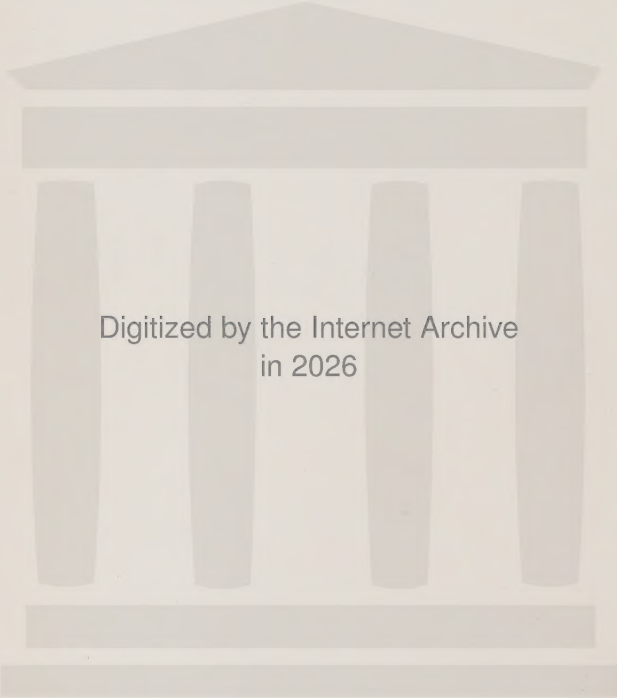
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THE LIFE
OF
GEORGE THE FOURTH

INCLUDING
HIS LETTERS AND OPINIONS

WITH
A VIEW OF THE MEN, MANNERS, AND POLITICS
OF HIS REIGN.

BY
PERCY FITZGERALD, M.A., F.S.A.,
AUTHOR OF "THE LIFE OF GARRICK."

In Two Volumes.
VOL. I.



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FIT
VOL 1.

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CHARLES DICKENS AND EVANS,
CRYSTAL PALACE PRESS.

To Lord Houghton.

DEAR LORD HOUGHTON,

One of the pleasures associated with the conclusion of this labour of many years, is that of inscribing the following pages to you, by whose kind suggestions they have materially benefited.

Believe me,

Always sincerely yours,

PERCY FITZGERALD.

FANE VALLEY,



BOOK I.

PRINCE OF WALES.—1762-1811.





THE LIFE OF GEORGE IV.

CHAPTER I.

1762.

FROM daybreak on the morning of August 12th, 1762, crowds had been assembled round St. James's Palace, waiting the news of the birth of a royal child, which was hourly expected. Inside the palace were gathered all the great officers of state who had been in attendance all the night, with the Princess Dowager of Wales, the Dukes of Devonshire and Rutland, the Archbishop of Canterbury, and other distinguished personages. Dr. Hunter, the great surgeon, was "in attendance," but only in reserve in case of emergency, for the Queen had prejudices against calling in the assistance of the accoucheur; and the office of assisting her Majesty through the crisis was delegated to a simple midwife.* Twenty-four minutes past seven o'clock was the exact moment that ushered the future prince, prince regent, and king into this world. At thirteen minutes past three o'clock, on a Saturday morning in June, sixty-seven years later, this new-born babe was to depart from it. The contrast between the joyful acclamations and the splendid retinue which welcomed his birth, and the desertion and indifference which attended his death, was significant, and worthy of the study of princes. One companion of his pleasures, and a few doctors and servants, were all who witnessed that scene; while outside, the feeling was about that of relief and

* Mrs. Stephens. Huish, "Memoirs of George IV.," i. 8. Mrs. Draper is mentioned in the publications, but she was the Prince of Wales's nurse.

satisfaction. He, however, was now a smiling infant in Mrs. Draper's arms. No one could forecast the life that was in store for it, and there was universal joy at the birth of an heir to the Crown. The young king, in his satisfaction, presented the messenger that brought the good news with a "gratification" of five hundred pounds, and was presently drawn to the window of his palace to witness an omen of excellent augury. The Park guns were still firing, when loud rumbling announced the passage of a train of tumbrels known to contain the treasure captured from a Spanish galleon—a prize of enormous value, now on its way to the Tower. Twenty waggons descended St. James's Street, and passed before the King and Court. Under these circumstances, then, came into the world the future George IV., the Prince Regent, and "first gentleman of Europe."

Not until August 17th, the royal infant, who was born Electoral Prince of Brunswick-Lunenbug, Duke of Cornwall and Rothesay, Earl of Carrick, Baron of Renfrew, Lord of the Isles, and Great Steward of Scotland, was created Prince of Wales and Earl of Chester by patent.*

The royal pair were anxious to encourage access of all comers to the new hope of the kingdom. Before the infant was a fortnight old, public notice was given that all who desired it might visit St. James's Palace, "on drawing-room days," between one and three o'clock, an offer of which abundant advantage was taken. The crowd of ladies thus tempted to flock to the Court, to see the child and taste her Majesty's caudle and cake, soon became enormous, the daily expense for cake alone being estimated at forty pounds, while the consumption of wine was "greater than could have been expected."†

The christening took place on September 8th, in the great council-chamber of the palace, and was performed by Secker, the Archbishop of Canterbury—"that right reverend midwife," as Mr. Walpole styled him, in allusion to his presence at the Queen's accouchement. The names chosen were George Augustus Frederick, and the godfathers were the Dukes of Cumberland and Mecklenburgh-Strelitz—the latter represented by the Duke of Devonshire—the Princess of Wales being godmother. At this

* Thus, for this most familiar of his designations, the heir-apparent is indebted to the favour of the Crown. His inherited honours give him no higher dignity than a dukedom. It was noted that George IV. held no Irish dignity, but the present Prince of Wales was created Earl of Dublin when nine years old—a dignity which is to be enjoyed by him and his heirs for ever.

† Many stories were told of the free-and-easy behaviour of the eager throng. Two Jewish ladies sent their footman to the palace, "to know

ceremony, which was held at night, there was shown the same eagerness to gratify the loyal aspirations of the crowd. All who came were admitted; but this, fortunately, had not got abroad, so but few used the privilege, and not more than half-a-dozen ladies of title attended. But, in spite of all these efforts, the royal pair were not popular, and when the Queen showed herself in public at an installation, there was an outcry against "the indelicacy of so early an appearance," and the matter was warmly controverted. Her friends had to defend her on the ground of her German training and habits.*

The usual addresses and loyal demonstrations were offered by the Parliament, universities, and the leading cities of the kingdom. Later on, fresh offence, however, was given when it was known that the royal child was to be submitted to inoculation, then a novelty, and the preachers protested that it was interfering with the order of Providence. The King and Queen, however, were firm, and had the courage to adopt the new preservative in the case of all their children. Lady Charlotte Finch was appointed governess, and Mrs. Henrietta Coulsworth deputy governess.†

From his birth set in that long series of portraits in which the figure and features of the young prince and maturer regent were being portrayed on the canvas. No one was painted so frequently. We are told that "soon after his birth the Queen had a whole-length portrait modelled in wax. He was represented naked. The figure was half a span long, lying upon a crimson cushion, and it was covered by a bell-glass. Her Majesty had it constantly on her toilet at Buckingham House. At the decease

how the Queen did?" and were told by Lady Northampton that they should have come in person. "That's good!" said the fellow, "why she lies in herself;" if she had not, I suppose she would have expected the Queen to send to her.—Walpole "Letters" (Cunningham), iii. 18.

* A preacher of note—Mr. Simpson—invighed from the pulpit against this "indelicacy;" and a Dr. Vandegucht, a Dutch clergyman, who defended the Queen, was roughly handled by the mob.—Huish, i. 9.

† The two selected nurses, "wet and dry," it was solemnly announced, were Mrs. Scott and Mrs. Chapman; the "necessary woman" was Mrs. Dodson, and the two "rockers" were Jane Simpson and Catherine Johnson. The person who had enjoyed the honour of suckling the Prince was a lady—Mrs. Scott, of Scottshall—of an old Scotch family but much reduced, and to whom the office was very welcome. "She is much liked by our King and royal family," wrote Mrs. Montagu, who looked to the children obtaining little places in the household; "and I hope the scheme, which I have forwarded to the utmost of my power, will save an ancient, honourable family from ruin. Her royal nursing is as fine and healthy a child as can be."—Dr. Doran, "A Lady of the Last Century," p. 131.

of her Majesty it was exhibited; the likeness was still palpable, though the original had outlived the date of the fairy model more than half a century. Few years passed, it is believed, without her Majesty having his portrait either in miniature, enamel, silhouette, modelled in marble or wax, or in some other style of art. One of the latest, if not the very last, was a miniature head of his royal highness, enamelled by Mr. Bone, which he had the honour of placing in her Majesty's hands at Windsor the year before her death."* Another picture of the young prince was painted about this time by Cotes. It represented him in his mother's arms; a rather large-faced child, a singular anticipation of the features of his future child, the Princess Charlotte. The hand of the Queen is raised as if to enjoin quiet and silence. This was always a favourite with the King, as representing the two persons to whom he was most attached.

Evidence of his promising condition was soon given when a deputation from a society styled the Ancient Britons presented him with an address. It seems scarcely credible that an infant, not three years old, should have to acknowledge such a compliment either vicariously or otherwise, but he was said to have done so in a set speech: "I thank you for this mark of your duty to the King, and wish prosperity to the charity." These words, we are told, were, according to the delighted courtiers, delivered with singular propriety, and a grace that even then almost warranted the adoption of his well-known *sobriquet*.†

In the following year, on August 16th, a second son was born—the Duke of York, whose christening, fourteen months after his birth, was attended by some curious ceremonies. Within seven months the King had appointed the infant to be Bishop of Osnaburg, a promotion that caused some scandal as well as much angry contention with the chapter of Cologne, who contended that the appointment lay with them. The dispute went on for some years, until it was compromised through the mediation of the great Frederick, and the young prince was allowed to bear the title and revenues of his office.‡ The first formal introduction of the young children to the public was on the occasion of a drawing-room, held by them in their own name in October, 1769. The Prince of Wales, we are told, was assisted by his sister, the

* Huish.

† He was "tutored" in the speech for days before. But the Ancient Britons were told that they would not be received again.

‡ One loyal writer, Burgh, actually dedicated a work "To the Right Reverend Father in God," of three years old.

Princess Royal, then two years old.* The order of their daily life and the arrangements for their education were creditable to the good sense and care of the royal parents. The old house at Kew, which had belonged to Secretary Molyneux, had now been settled on the Queen, and was called the Queen's House, later to be the scene of many painful trials. The Bower Lodge and the houses on the old Green were given up to the children,† who did not reside under the same roof with their parents. Their day was after this pattern. If they had become a little indisposed, the King was afoot at five in the morning, and, going down to their house, would tap at their doors and inquire how they had rested. At eight the Prince of Wales, Prince Frederick, the Princess Royal, and the Princes William and Edward, were brought from their several apartments on the Green at Kew to the Queen's house to breakfast with their parents. "At nine the youngest children attended, and whilst the eldest were closely plying their tasks, the little ones with their nurses passed the morning in Richmond Gardens. The King and Queen frequently amused themselves with sitting in the room while the children dined; and once a week, accompanied by the whole group in pairs, they made a tour round these extensive plantations. In the evening it was the custom for all the children again to pay their respects at the Queen's house before they retired to rest; and the same order was observed through each succeeding day, without any deviation, while at that place of residence. On Sunday every member of the family of a proper age was required to attend public worship; and in the evening his Majesty himself

* Some ridicule attended this proceeding, which was borrowed from German etiquette, and caricatures were published representing the children going through the ceremonies with their tops, kites, etc. They at last rebelled; and a story went that the boys had refused to leave their cricket, saying the company might wait.

† When making arrangements, the careful monarch thus wrote to his minister: "I take this opportunity of enclosing you a list of the servants that I find absolutely necessary to place about my third and fourth sons." He adds, he has brought the expense as low as the nature of the thing would admit.

Preceptors	{ Mr. De Budè	£350
	{ Rev. Mr. Hooke.	300
Pages of the	{ Mannerlay { Each: Salary, £80	} . 200
Backstairs	{ Miller { Morning, 20	
Housekeeper		50
For keeping three hounds, each	£20	60
Porter		30
Watchman		25
Writing Master		100
		—£1115

made it a rule to read a discourse from the writings of some of our best divines."*

This is an agreeable family picture, though the impression abroad was that the discipline was far too severe. The Duke of Sussex, nearly seventy years later, complained to Dr. Holland of the too great strictness of his royal father, and described himself as being then afflicted with an asthmatic breathing, which his tutor "required him to stop;" and which, after various rebukes and threats, ended in sound flogging. This, he added, was by no means a rare occurrence. A tutor would scarcely have ventured to have thus indulged his temper unless he felt that he would be supported.†

The Duke of York also retailed painful impressions of this period, describing how the tutor would hit them with his pencil on the head if they were inattentive.‡

* Watkins, "Mem. Duke of York," p. 28.

† Ticknor's "Life," ii. 152.

‡ In what kind of family circle the children were reared may be conceived from the training their mother had to pass through. "Except the Ladies of the Bedchamber," says Mrs. Harcourt, in her Diary (pp. 45, 46), printed by Mr. Locker, "for $\frac{1}{2}$ an hour in a week in a funeral circle, or a ceremonious drawing Room she never had a soul to speak to but the King. That this continued till her first child the P. of Wales was born, that then the nurse & his Governess Lady C. Finch coming into the Room was a little treat, but that they had still for years no other society till by degrees the Ladies of the Bed Chamber came more frequently, and latterly the Society for various reasons, the Children growing up, the journies &c. was much encreased. . . . Expecting to be Queen of a gay Court, finding herself confined as in a Convent, & hardly allowed to think without the leave of her husband checked her spirits, made her fearful & cautious to an extreme, & when the time came that amusements were allowed her her mind was formed to a diff^t manner of life."

CHAPTER II.

1771—1776.

THIS early stage, however, was soon passed. In the year 1771, when the royal child was nine years old, it was considered time that a scheme for his education should be formally arranged. The second brother was to receive a thoroughly German education. A system of complete and careful English instruction was determined upon. Accordingly, in February, Dr. Markham, lately Master of Westminster School, and now Bishop of Chester, was appointed preceptor, Dr. Cyril Jackson, sub-preceptor, while Lord Holderness became governor. The latter was the real director of the children, and was to look after their conduct generally. For the post of sub-governor—a highly important office—there were many candidates.

Among the candidates for this office were two clergymen of a doubtful notoriety. One was Kidgell, who had done dirty work for Lord Sandwich, and had been a sort of bludgeon-man on the press. He had contrived to get permission to dedicate some fables to the young princes; but when the King read the book he was so disgusted at the mixture of levity and gross flattery that he was at the expense of buying up the whole impression. The other clergyman, who had greatly attracted the Queen, was the unfortunate Dr. Dodd. She was in his favour, but the King positively declined, not relishing the style and manner of the candidate.

But the person chosen was Mr. Smelt, a well-known figure in Madame D'Arblay's memoirs; a man of signal uprightness and virtue, but "a violent revolution whig." As assistant tutors, Lord Holderness selected two foreign refugee Protestants, Budé

and Salzes, the latter a Swiss of much worth, while Dr. Majendie, the Queen's reader, attended them for Latin and English. The King and Queen added their exertions; the former being considered to read with propriety and grace, while the Queen imparted instruction in French, German, and even English, which she could scarcely as yet have been very familiar with.

The sub-preceptor gave lessons, while the bishop supervised and controlled the whole. Markham was a highly-successful schoolmaster, who had been promoted to the deanery of Christ Church, and afterwards, as was becoming a prince's instructor, received the rich prize of the archbishopric of York. He was a pert, arrogant man, by Mr. Walpole's account, and owed his recommendation to Lord Mansfield. Dr. Jackson was a person of a rather unique type, having refused bishoprics three times.* He seems to have been a worthy and conscientious man, spoken of with much respect by his contemporaries. Lord Holderness, Mr. Walpole tells us, "owed his office to his insignificance and his wife," who, it was supposed, prompted her husband to use the opportunities afforded by his residence at the Cinque Ports for smuggling.† A board composed of such heterogeneous elements was not likely to work harmoniously, and almost at once the Court was agitated by what might be considered a scandal.

It became known that the governor and sub-preceptor were at open war. Late in 1775, the former, from "a violent humour" in his face, which struck in upon his breast and affected his hearing, had been obliged to go to the South of France. On his return he found that advantage had been taken of his absence to prejudice the minds of his pupils against him. "They had treated his author with contempt, and often ridiculed him to his face.‡ The juvenile Bishop of Osnaburg "set on" his elder brother; what he was to do very often later, even when both were old men. The latter, however, was always showing himself self-willed and headstrong to his father as well as to his mother, who could not control him. Lord Holderness accused Jackson of setting his pupils against him. There were suspicions that the bishop was at the bottom of the confusion, while Jackson declared the governor to be "most trifling and unfit for his charge." In this general wrangle the only course

* Hurd, his successor in the tutorship, declined the primacy of Ireland, as Jackson was said to have done that of England.

† It was stated that in a single "venture" she introduced one hundred and fourteen dresses.

‡ "Last Journals" of Walpole, ii. 51, which see also for an account of the whole incident.

was to provide a new set of instructors. The King, indeed, wished to retain Lord Holderness; but the latter declined to stay, on the ground, it would seem, that he had lost all control over his charge. Smelt, whose character Mrs. Delany declared, with some exaggeration, "to be of the most noble and delicate kind, and deserving the pen of a Clarendon to do justice to it," followed his patron, refusing a pension from the King. De Salzes, the refugee, also insisted on retiring, significantly giving as a reason the "ungovernable temper of his charge, the Prince of Wales."*

This was told by Lord Holderness himself to Lord Hertford, who reported it to Walpole. It speaks badly for the system that the humours of a headstrong child should have had a share in such changes.

But the most painful part of this transaction was this early anticipation of future discord between the King and Prince; for it seems certain that between the boy of fourteen and his father there was already implanted a reciprocal dislike; and Lord Hertford declared that the boy stood in no awe of either his father or his mother. The King was seriously affected by this discovery, and it was noticed that he was wasted with the anxiety. When he wrote his letter to Lord North, he says it had made him "ill of his business." It will be seen from the following that he was, and what steps he took. The passage of his sons "would secretly feel a kind of victory, if the bishop remained," is significant.

"MY DEAR LORD" (he wrote from Kew, May 27)
 "... I mentioned the Lord[s] of Portsmouth, Ashurst, and Bruce as the only persons that occurred to me in the least from their characters, as fit to succeed Lord Holderness. . . . I also mentioned that from principles of honour I could not press Mr. Smelt to continue Sub-Governor with any other Governor than Lord Holderness; that Mr. Jackson knowing he was to be removed prior to my receiving any intimation of Lord Holderness's intentions to retire, the Bishop of Chester was the only one of the establishment concerning whom it was necessary for me to take any decision; that on principle I think the Governor is my representative, and as such no one about them must have more hold on them than him, therefore that on the new appointment of a Governor I must produce a new preceptor: when to this is added the want of regard of my sons to Lord Holderness has made him resign, though he will put it on his health, they

* "Last Journals" of Walpole, ii. 53.

would secretly feel a kind of victory if the Bishop remained: I therefore yesterday took the painful task of sending for the Bishop of Chester, and with kindness and frankness told him that, as Lord Holderness meant to retire, I should at the same time appoint a new preceptor. . . . On Thursday I saw Lord Bruce, and used every argument to compell him to step forth to my assistance. . . . On Saturday he wished to decline, but after a very full conversation, seeing my distress of mind, he very handsomely consented to accept, provided the Bishop of Litchfield came to his assistance. He has by my direction spoke this morning to that Bishop, and on Wednesday I hope to be able to say to you that I have secured those two, which will restore my mind to a state of ease, which you cannot think a tender father can possess unless satisfied of the moral principles of men to whose care he intrusts his children."

In another letter he writes:

"LORD NORTH,—The letter I received this day from you, in answer to mine of yesterday, is the most ample proof of your affectionate feeling for me. The Bishop of Litchfield has with great readiness and propriety agreed to come as preceptor to my children. I shall therefore direct Lord Bruce and him to come and kiss hands at the levée on Friday."

For sub-governor the King found "a highly proper person" in Colonel Hotham. The new preceptor owed his post directly to Lord Mansfield, who brought under the King's notice some "Dialogues on the British Constitution." He brought with him his own chaplain, Dr. Arnald, as sub-preceptor; a man of much reputation at the university, and "whose mildness, morals, and cheerfulness," according to the King, were as conspicuous as his talents.*

Hurd recommended himself much at Court, and the King always displayed a particular affection to him, writing to him in the warmest terms, and when invasion was apprehended selected his palace as the place he was to retire to. He was, no doubt, an excellent man, and the fact that he was disliked by his royal pupils, by whom Markham was preferred, is scarcely to his discredit. Years after, at a great dinner given by the Duke of Norfolk in St. James's Square, where were the Prince, Fox, Sheridan, Erskine, Dr. Parr, and other persons of note, a

* Letter to Lord North, ii. 33. But about 1782 his wits became unsettled, and his delusions seem to have been oddly connected with preferment, for he used to wear a mitre about the house.

discussion took place on the comparative merits of the two preceptors, and which is even dramatic in its illustration of the character of the Prince and of the resolute Parr.

"The Archbishop of York," writes one who took down a description of the scene from Parr's own lips, then in a declining state of health, "being alluded to, the Prince observed: 'I esteem Markham a much greater, wiser, and more learned man than Hurd, and a better teacher. You will allow me to be a judge, as they were both my preceptors.' Said Dr. Parr: 'Is it your Royal Highness's pleasure that I should enter upon the topic of their comparative merits as a subject of discussion?' 'Yes,' said the Prince. 'Then, sir,' said Parr, 'I totally differ from your Royal Highness in opinion.' 'As I knew them both so intimately,' replied the Prince, 'you will not deny that I had the power of more accurately appreciating their respective merits than you can have had.' The Prince then spoke of Markham's natural dignity and authority as compared with Hurd's smoothness and softness, 'and, with proper submission to your authority on such a subject, his experience as a schoolmaster and his better scholarship.' 'Sir,' said Parr, 'your Royal Highness began the conversation, and if you permit it to go on must tolerate a very different inference.' 'Go on,' said the Prince. 'I declare that Markham understands Greek better than Hurd, for when I hesitated Markham immediately explained it, and then he went on, but when I hesitated with Hurd he always referred me to the dictionary; I conclude he therefore wanted to be informed himself.' 'Sir,' replied Parr, 'I venture to differ from your Royal Highness's conclusion. I am myself a schoolmaster, and I think that Dr. Hurd pursued the right method, and that Dr. Markham failed in his duty. Hurd desired your Royal Highness to find the word, not because he did not know it, but because he wished you to find by search and learn it thoroughly.' 'Have you not changed your opinion of Hurd?' exclaimed the Prince. 'I have read a work in which you attacked him fiercely.' 'Yes, sir, I attacked him on one point which I thought important to letters, and I summoned the whole force of my mind and took every possible pains to do it well, for I consider Hurd to be a great man. . . . There is no comparison between Markham and Hurd as men of talent. Markham was a pompous schoolmaster; Hurd was a stiff, cold, but correct gentleman. Markham was at the head of a good school, tutor of a good college, and finally became an archbishop; in all these stations he had trumpeters of his fame who called him great, though he published one "Concio" only, which has already sunk in oblivion. From a

farmhouse and village school Hurd emerged, the friend of Gray and a circle of distinguished men, and sent from the obscurity of a country village a book, sir, which your royal father, sir, is said to have declared made him a bishop. And perhaps, sir, a portion of the adroitness and power you have manifested in this debate might have been owing to him.* Fox, when the Prince was gone, exclaimed in his high tone of voice: 'He thought he had caught you, but he caught a Tartar.' The argument was maintained with some heat.**

The shallowness of the Prince's reasoning—which had yet a specious air—may be contrasted with the doctor's intrepid vindication of Hurd, to whom he bore no good-will; as indeed his adversary, with some malice, took care to remind him.†

Though the new preceptor started hopefully on his course, writing to his friends that his pupils were "extremely promising," he was not long in forming a judgment of the character of the eldest. Indeed it seems that the Prince exhibited, at this early age, many of those ungracious qualities which were to distinguish him when he was grown up; and his new master augured but badly of his future career. To his cousin, Mrs. Parsons, the bishop said one day in reply to a question as to the progress of his pupil: "My dear," he replied, laying his peculiarly small white hand upon her arm, "I can hardly tell; he will be either the most polished gentleman or the most accomplished blackguard in Europe; possibly an admixture of both."‡

Perhaps the most interesting event of his childhood was the meeting with Dr. Johnson, who met with him one day when he was reading in the royal library. The doctor, who spoke to him some grave words of encouragement, had thus been in some sort of communication with five sovereigns. He had been touched for the evil by Queen Anne; he must have often seen the first and second Georges in the streets of London; with the third and fourth he had spoken.

It is not surprising therefore to find that with these appointments the King's troubles were only to recommence. Lord Bruce was barely established in his place, and had dined once with his pupil, when he abruptly retired to the country. It was said indeed that he left it to the Bishop of Lichfield to tell the King that he would not return. The cause was said to be his wife, who thought she would be deprived of his

* Parr, "Life," i. 322.

† In testimony of his regard for Markham, he included his portrait in the collection he had made of his friends' portraits, and on that prelate's death went to the expense of having it engraved.—"Memoirs of the Prince of Wales," 1808.

‡ Kilvert, "Life of Hurd," p. 378.

society. The poor worried King thus unfolds his distress to his counsellor :

“LORD NORTH” (he wrote on June 2nd, 1776),—“I thought by the step I had taken yesterday that my distress was at an end; but after you left me this day I saw the Bishop of Litchfield, who brought me the melancholy news that some difficulties from Lady Bruce had so agitated her husband that he was come to acquaint me from him that he could not think of being Governor to my children. The Bishop broke it with the greatest gentleness. I instantly sent Lord Ashburnham, whose secrecy I could depend upon, to acquaint the D. of Montague of this event, and to desire the Duke to come to me. I have so powerfully shewn that my fresh distress arose from his family, that I have persuaded him to supply the place of his brother, which he does on the following conditions—not to be appointed until Wednesday, by which he avoids appearing on the birthday, for which he has no cloaths, and that Lord Bruce may still have the Earldom of Ailesbury.”

The Duke of Montague agreed to take the place on these valuable considerations.

In connection with this matter, a curious scene occurred between the King and the Bishop, which is reported by the Duke of Leeds in his MS. memoranda: “The King sent for him, and told him that ‘he had determined on making an entirely new establishment.’ The other seemed surprised, and not very respectfully said, ‘Has your Majesty consulted Lord Mansfield?’ The King, astonished at so strange a question, replied he surely was master to appoint whom he pleased to overlook the education of his children, and repeated his determination. The Bishop, from the imperious tone with which he had just addressed his sovereign, now changed to the most abject humility, and with tears begged the King to consider his numerous family. His Majesty assured him it should make no alteration in his future preferment. The Bishop retired confused.”

Walpole, however, did not at this moment know of the story that was circulated at Lord Bruce’s expense—viz. that his lively pupil, the Prince of Wales, had maliciously led him to expose his ignorance in Homer and Greek generally. The Prince, it was added, was able to set him right in a quotation, as well as to point out a false quantity. This was questioned by the tutor, on which the pupil appealed to better authority, and it was decided

against Lord Bruce, who was much laughed at. Such was the story.

The new governor was probably indulgent enough, though it is difficult to arrive at a true estimate of his disposition; for Mr. Walpole tells us he was one of the "weakest and most ignorant men living," while Hurd's obsequious biographer extols him as a nobleman of singular worth and virtue, of an exemplary life, and of the best principles in Church and State. He was very attentive to his charges, and executed that trust with great propriety and dignity. The preceptor (*i.e.*, Bishop Hurd) was honoured with his confidence, and there never was the least misunderstanding between them;* this last reason may account for this cordial estimate.

Under this new direction the education of these princes was started afresh. They were now removed to Kew Palace, and were directly under the eye of the King and Queen. A course of study was marked out for them. Eight hours a day were given to classics and languages. Cicero's *Offices* was a favourite work of study, and there was an attempt at carrying out a sort of German ideal by instructing the youths in husbandry and such matters.†

We are told that a spot of ground, in the garden at Kew, was dug by his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales and by his brother the Duke of York, who sowed it with wheat, attended the growth of their little crop, weeded, reaped, and harvested it solely by themselves. "They threshed out the corn and separated it from the chaff, and at this period of their work were brought to reflect, from their own experience, on the various labours and attentions of the husbandman and the farmer. The Princes not only raised their own crop, but they also ground it, and having parted the bran from the meal, attended to the whole process of making it into bread, which, it may well be imagined, was eaten with no slight relish. The King and Queen partook of the philosophical repast, and beheld with pleasure the very amusements of their children rendered the source of useful knowledge."

* Kilvert, p. 365.

† In the British Museum is to be seen a translation made by the Prince about this time, of which the following is a specimen:

"As soon as I heard your daughter Tullia was dead, I confess I was extremely concerned, as it became me to be at a loss which I regarded as common to us both; and if I had been with you I should not have been wanting to you, but should have openly testified the bitterness of my grief. 'Tis true this is but a poor and miserable consolation, because those who ought to administer it, I mean our nearest friends and relations, are almost equally affected with ourselves, nor can they attempt it without shedding many a tear, so that they appear more to be in want of comfort themselves, than perform that duty to others."

The Prince's instructor in the graces of elocution was Mr. Bartley, one of the last of the good old school of actors, who had deserved Charles Lamb's praise. His drawing-master was a Russian named Cozens, while Angelo taught him fencing. Nothing, indeed, was more remarkable than the elegant tastes of this royal family, pursued with thorough conscientiousness; and it was no doubt owing to his being brought up in such an atmosphere that the Prince owed his tone of connoisseurship. The number of masters and professors engaged at the palace was considerable. The Queen herself took lessons from Gainsborough; the King himself was taught architectural drawing by Sir William Chambers, perspective by Kirby, and grammar by Mrs. Trimmer. Quin had instructed him in elocution, and Denoyer was the drawing-master for the princes. The Princess Elizabeth published a folio of etchings; while the walls of Frogmore were hung with her pen-and-ink drawings, and decorated in the "Asiatic style," whatever that was then considered to be. She even tried her skill at mezzotint engraving.

Little wine was allowed, and great regularity of hours was insisted on. This, however well-intentioned, seemed hardly judicious, and it was only natural to suppose that the Prince should look eagerly to the time when he should be emancipated. The preceptor was, of course, entirely on the side of the patron who had favoured him, and is described as "a little plausible man, affecting a singular decorum that endeared him highly to devout old ladies." So that here were severe and arbitrary parents, a weak preceptor, and "the most foolish man in England" as governor—influences not likely to operate favourably on a self-willed, self-indulgent, and hot-tempered youth. The tutor being thus engrossed with "currying favour" with the King, the pupil was left to the company of servants and grooms. The story went that the King did all he could to protract his son's nonage, and keep him a schoolboy. He was made to wear a child's frilled collar, to which he one day called a servant's attention, saying: "See how they treat me!"* It was not wonderful that he took every means to elude the vigilance of his guardians. The worthy Mrs. Chapone, however, gives a highly favourable picture of the interior of the royal family circle. This occurred in the year 1778: "Mr. Buller," she says, "went to Windsor on Saturday; saw the King, who inquired much about the Bishop [of Winchester], and hearing that he would be eighty-two next Monday, 'Then,' said the King, 'I will go and wish him joy.'

* Walpole, "Last Journals," i. 108.

‘And I,’ said the Queen, ‘will go too.’ Mr. B. then dropt a hint of the additional pleasure it would give the Bishop if he could see the Princes. ‘That,’ said the King, ‘requires contrivance; but if I can manage it, we will all go.’ On the Monday following, the royal party, consisting of their Majesties, the Prince of Wales, Duke of York, Duke of Clarence, the Princess Royal, and Princess Augusta, visited the Bishop. The King,” continues Mrs. Chapone, “sent the Princes to pay their compliments to Mrs. Chapone; himself, he said, was an old acquaintance. Whilst the Princes were speaking to me, Mr. Arnald, sub-preceptor, said, ‘These gentlemen are well acquainted with a certain ode prefixed to Mrs. Carter’s *Epictetus*, if you know anything of it.’ Afterwards the King came and spoke to us, and the Queen led the Princess Royal to me, saying: ‘This is a young lady, who, I hope, has much profited by your instructions. She has read them, [“*Letters on the Improvement of the Mind*”] more than once, and will read them often;’ and the Princess assented to the praise which followed with a very modest air. I was pleased with all the Princes, but particularly with Prince William, who is little of his age, but so sensible and engaging, that he won the Bishop’s heart, to whom he particularly attached himself, and would stay with him while all the rest ran about the house. His conversation was surprisingly manly and clever for his age, yet, with the young Bullers, he was quite the boy, and said to John Buller, by way of encouraging him to talk, ‘Come, we are both boys, you know.’ All of them showed affectionate respect to the Bishop; the Prince of Wales pressed his hand so hard that he hurt it.”

A yet more pleasing picture of the simple tastes of this excellent King and his Queen was the mode of commemorating the birthday of the young Prince of Wales. In these happy times Windsor and Weymouth were favourite places of *villeggiatura* for the royal family. At the former place the morning was ushered in so early as six o’clock by the ringing of bells, and a *feu de joie* was fired. Before nine the young princes arrived from Kew to wait on their father, and at ten a procession was formed of all the royal family and the attendants, who walked in state to the church. The Prince and his six brothers walked two and two, sumptuously arrayed in blue and gold; the three young princesses followed. In the church, all marched up to the table and made their offerings of gold and silver. On their return a procession was formed again, which was swelled by the canons and clergy, who attended them to the door of the palace. Later in the day the royal children appeared on the terrace, where they were greeted with a salute of three volleys from the soldiers; this was with the good-natured purpose of showing themselves

to the loyal Windsor folks, who thronged in crowds to look at them. They retired to dine, and at half-past six the Prince and his brothers took leave of their father and returned to Kew. So simple and innocent a mode of celebrating a birthday might seem strange and old-fashioned in our time. And it may be said that this custom of royal personages exhibiting themselves to the public in the "walks at Windsor," and which was persevered in all through that long reign, would seem to have been a very wise and laudable one. For in this fashion was loyalty fostered. But this patriarchal system was not to last much longer.

CHAPTER III.

1779.

THE PRINCE OF WALES was now approaching his nineteenth year, when he was to become legally of age, as heir to the throne. Complaints of the rigorous system of discipline began to be heard. It was stated that he was not allowed to appear at balls until the summer of the year 1779, and then only because the Spanish minister asked it as a favour. He himself began to protest loudly. "The Prince of Wales," so ran a paragraph in one of the papers, "with a spirit which does him honour, has three times requested a change in that system. Time will show whether the *junta* have laid their foundations upon a rock or upon sand." He had already begged to have a commission in the army, and to be allowed to go about as he pleased, like other young men of the day. It happened at this time that the King was busily engaged in visiting the forts and dockyards, and in further kindling the public enthusiasm by tours of inspection and reviews. The two young men earnestly begged to be allowed to attend him on these occasions. Their request was refused, but, instead, they were taken out to Kew Gardens to receive lessons in fortification and gunnery. They were also allowed to shift their residence occasionally from Windsor to Kew. This pedantic restraint overshot the mark, and the young princes seized eagerly the opportunity of their father's absence to cultivate an intimacy with the gay nobles of the day, who quickly instructed them as to how they were to break loose from this disagreeable bondage. These lessons they almost at once bettered, as the King was presently to learn, and within a few months the forebodings of the worthy bishop, their tutor, were to be realised.

It is probable that if sounder instruction had been given he would not have followed; but still it must be owned that the stupid, odious, German, sergeant-system of discipline that had been so rigorously applied was, in fact, responsible for the blemishes in the young Prince's character. It will be seen, as we pursue the course of his life, that an indifference to truth was one of these blemishes; and this, as may be conceived, was owing to childish terror of those above him. There are two simple anecdotes connected with this matter which are almost convincing. Lord Essex, riding out with the King, met the young prince arrayed in a wig, and asked him sharply the reason of his wearing it. No doubt in some alarm, the Prince answered hastily: "That he was ordered to do so by the doctor as he was subject to cold." On which the King turned to his companion, and said: "A lie is ever ready when it is wanted." This shows what the feeling of the father was, and how little he cared to show his respect for his son.* Many years after, the son, become Prince Regent, consulted Lady Spencer as to the choice of a governess for his daughter. "Above all," he said, "I must teach her to tell the truth." Then he added this remarkable declaration: "You know that I don't speak the truth and my brothers don't, and I find it a great defect, from which I would have my daughter free. We have been brought up badly, the Queen having taught us to equivocate."† No one corroborated this candid confession and defect so heartily as the Duke of Wellington, who again and again seems to declare that he could not believe a word the prince said. Let the blame, however, or an important share of it, be placed where it is properly due. Yet the young prince was good-natured; and had he been properly directed might have turned out more creditably than he did. He was after heard to say: "I wish everyone would tell me what I ought to do; nobody gives me any instructions."

It is melancholy, too, to trace another result of this system. Being jealously shut up in the palace, and deprived of rational amusements, he had contracted a habit of private drinking, which told upon the scrofulous humours which, it was said, the Princess of Wales had introduced into the family, and which now broke out all over his face. To these excesses he was incited by his wild, ever-favourite brother, the youthful bishop, who had the most spirit, and put him on to acting with spirit. Unfortunately, too, at this time, the King was harassed by the insubordination of his brothers; and, in the dissensions that

* McCullagh Torrens's "Life of Lord Melbourne," i. 156

† Ibid. p. 157.

followed, the young princes found themselves encouraged to take part with them. The Duke of Cumberland, a man of depraved character, was not slow to profit by this spirit, and became the guide and prompter of his nephews. We find the young prince taking sides against his father in some of the exciting questions of the hour, such as the Keppel-Palliser episode—congratulating Miss Keppel on the result, and “declaring it the happiest event he had ever known”—and then “cutting” various persons who were on the side of the Court. In the question of the Duke of Gloucester’s marriage, he vehemently espoused his uncle’s side, assuring him “though he could not come to see him now without the King’s leave, that in a short time he would be of age, and his own master. That now he would give out that he intended to visit him.”*

All this was as unpromising as it was unbecoming. But the unlucky, if injudicious father, worried by brothers and sons, was now to feel shame at the discovery that this precocious youth had been secretly engaged in a scandalous intrigue with a notorious personage, Mrs. Robinson. This lady has left memoirs and poems, in which the whole transaction is set out at length in a romantic high-flown strain; but in which the prosaic and businesslike issues to which she conducted it, viz. the extorting of a bond for twenty thousand pounds, is lightly touched upon. The King had to undergo the humiliation of having to enter into a transaction with this person to save public exposure.

“I am sorry,” he wrote on August 28th, 1781, “to be obliged to open a subject that has long given me much pain, but I can rather do it on paper than in conversation: it is a subject of which I know he is not ignorant. My eldest son got last year into a very improper connection with an actress and woman of indifferent character through the *friendly* assistance of Ld. Malden; a multitude of letters past, which she has threatened to publish unless he, in short, bought them of her. He had made her very foolish promises [*sic*], which, undoubtedly, by her conduct to him she entirely cancelled. I have thought it right to authorize the getting them from her, and have employed Lieut.-Col. Hotham, on whose discession [*sic*] I could depend, to manage this business. He has now brought it to a conclusion, and has her consent to get these letters on her receiving £5000, undoubtedly an enormous sum; but I wish to get my son out of this shameful scrape. I desire you will therefore see Lieut.-Col. Hotham and settle this with him. I am happy at being able to say that I never was personally engaged in such a transaction, which perhaps makes me feel this the stronger.”

* Walpole, “Last Journals,” p. 417.

Of the bond engagement the King does not seem to have been aware, fancying all was arranged when the letters were secured at such an enormous price. Mr. Fox, at this time one of the most reckless of the London *roués* and a chosen companion of the Prince, undertook the arrangement of this delicate matter, and succeeded in recovering it in return for an annuity of four hundred pounds. This is more disastrous record than the career of this hapless creature, who, forsaken and paralysed, sank into misery and beggary, from which she appealed to her former admirer.

THE PRINCE OF WALES TO MRS. ROBINSON.

“DEAR MRS. ROBINSON,

“I have receiv'd your letter, and it really quite overcomes me, the scene of distress you so pathetically paint. I will certainly wait upon you, but I am afraid it will be late before I can come to the Ship, as I have company with me. Should it be within the *compass of my means* to rescue you from the abyss you apprehend that is before you, and for which you mention Mr. Brent, I need say that the temptation of gratifying others, and at the same time and by the same means making one's self happy, is too alluring to be neglected a single moment; however, you must allow me to be thus explicit and candid, that it must in great measure depend upon the extent of what will be necessary to be done for your service, and how far my funds may be adequate, as well as my power equal to attain that object. In the meantime only rest assured of my good wishes and good intentions.

“I am, dear Mrs. Robinson, very sincerely yours,

“GEORGE.*

“To Mrs. Robinson, Ship Inn, Brighton.”

There is some feeling and good nature in this reply, which is at the same time significant. For all through his life he was found ready to answer an immediate and instant appeal to his sympathy and affection. But after a delay, when these had time to grow cold, nothing would be done. Benevolence on such principles is simply gratifying an appetite, and is worthless.

As the secluded prince was presently to be enlarged, it was natural that some of the nobility should have expressed a wish that he should visit their houses in different parts of the country, and thus become acquainted with his future associates. The

* MS. in the possession of Sholto Hare, Esq.

young man eagerly hailed the notion of what was, in truth, a respectable and sensible mode of introduction; but the King refused to sanction the proposal. The best opinions seem to point to the Queen as the person most accountable for the whole course of treatment adopted towards the Prince.*

* During the Gordon Riots, he set his guardians at defiance, and hurried up to London to join his father, attended by a friend and a servant.

CHAPTER IV.

1780.

It was now the year 1780, and the King felt that he could no longer refuse his eldest son his freedom. In the summer it was noted as significant that their Majesties had drunk tea at Carlton House, and it was assumed that this mansion was to be got ready for the Prince. As a first step, however, it was determined to send away the Prince Frederick (the Bishop of Osnaburg) to the Continent, as it was imagined that his aid and advice would not be of advantage to the Prince of Wales. This was the view taken by the public at the time. The Prince was really distressed at losing his companion, and begged to be allowed to go with him. The scene of the parting is described as very affecting, "the Prince being so moved that he stood in a state of entire sensibility, unable to speak, or to express the concern by which he was agitated."*

The establishment now set on foot was but a "bit of one," as Walpole called it, for the Prince was to be kept at Buckingham House still under the royal eye. The King's letters will show how anxiously and equitably he proceeded to arrange this important matter. After declaring that he had been turning to his own old accounts, he says that he "considered that in addition to my eldest son's establishment I must furnish the incidental expenses to my second son's travelling and education, and the taking the three eldest boys now in the nursery and placing them with me: this I felt would require much deliberation, the result of which I will now fully state. . . .

"I have, therefore, in this view formed an honorable estab-

* Lloyd, "Life of George IV.," p. 33.

lishment, and given my son for Robes and Privy Purse the exact sum I had. His stables will be more expensive in point of saddle-horses, I keeping at that time but four, he will have sixteen; but by appointing a Groom of the Stole instead of a Master of the Horse, a set of horses and two footmen are diminished, which alone attended that officer in the first establishment of my late father. As my son will live in my house, he cannot have any occasion for those servants, necessary only if he kept house. . . . The difficulty I find of having persons whose private conduct I think may with safety be placed about a young person is not surprising, as, I thank Heaven, my morals and course of life have but little resembled those too prevalent in the present age; and certainly, of all objects in this life, the one I have most at heart is to form my children that they may be useful examples and worthy of imitation [*sic*]. I shall therefore be scrupulous as to the private lives of those I place about my son, though in other cases I never wish to be informed, unless of those great enormities that must make every man of principle shun the company of such persons; but in the case of my children, my happiness, as well as the good of the public, is materially concerned in this investigation.

"Lord North seemed to insinuate that, if the whole additional expense of my children did not exceed £30,000, he thought the money could be found. I have tried to keep it to £20,000, because, from the very numerous family [*sic*] I have, it is impossible to lodge them, and I must make some alterations for that purpose in the wings of the Queen's House."*

It is amusing to see the fixed purpose of the father to keep his son still in leading-strings by "serving him out" supplies as they were wanted, and making him live in his own house. The young Prince, of course, cordially accepted the arrangement, but as an instalment.†

* The reader will bear this in mind later when the question of the Prince's "arrear" come to be considered. Here we find the King declaring that the cost for *all* his children would not exceed the sum named.

† The prudent king made the following calculation of the expenses of Prince Edward's table for twelve months:

	£	s.	d.
Kitchen	1519	3	0
Spicery	93	11	0
Beer and ale	92	8	0
Bread	107	4	1½
Dessert	357	0	0
Wines	115	18	0
Butter and cheese	37	6	0
	£2322	10	1½

But it is curious to note the misgiving the King entertained, and the rather tortuous mode which he adopted to obtain public approval. "Some one," he wrote to his ministers in February, 1781, "of the P. of Wales's family may be authorized, if it should in the debate be thought right, just to drop that he is satisfied with the arrangements I have made for him; for it would be highly indelicate for me to speak to my son on the subject; indeed, I have done for him all that could in reason be expected from me, and I have already grounds to judge the extraordinaries, from his love of expence, will be great, besides some other calls for money that will come from that quarter, which convinces me the more that if the allowance had been greater that would not have prevented this other article."

Colonel Hotham was to be Treasurer, and a second son of Lord Dartmouth, who was to be Groom of the Chamber, had, indeed, the drawback of being a young man, but the King waived the objection in consequence of "the known piety of the father." There was a dulness and a lack of knowledge in these provisions which might make us augur the worst.

Thus appointed and thus emancipated, the young prince was launched upon his new career. We shall now see what qualifications he was fitted with on entering on the world of fashion, and what figure he presented to admiring society, eager to welcome him, and indulgently condone as well as encourage his follies.

On New Year's Day, 1781, the Prince appeared at Court, enfranchised, in his new capacity, attended by his retinue. He received the congratulations of all the nobility and foreign ministers. From the pictures of him at this time by Cosway and others, he appears as a good-looking youth of a highly florid tone, made more conspicuous by the powder he wore and his

Carried forward from page 24	£	s.	d.
	2322	10	1½
Supposing H. R. H. to dine at home every day :			
In these twelve months H.R.H. dined at			
Windsor 42 days, which makes a deduction of	267	3	0

Total expense of the last twelve months	£2055	7	1½
£5000 per annum for my dearly-beloved son P. Frederick.			
2500 per annum for my dearly-beloved sons P. William and P. Edward.			
3500 per annum for my dearly-beloved sons P. Ernest, P. Augustus,			
and P. Adolphus.			G. R.

The Duke of Sussex told Mr. Adolphus that till he was twenty-one his pocket-money never exceeded a guinea a week. When he was thirty he was allowed £2000 a year.

high neckerchief. His coat was of pink silk, with white cuffs; his waistcoat of white silk, embroidered with various-coloured foil, but adorned with a profusion of French paste; and his hat was ornamented with two rows of steel beads, five thousand in number, with a button and loop of the same metal, and cocked in a new military style. "The King at the same time commanded all the domestics of his kitchen to submit their heads to be shaved, and wear wigs, on pain of being discharged; forty complied with the royal mandate, how many proved refractory does not appear."

"The graces of his person," says one of his admirers—Mrs. Robinson—"the irresistible sweetness of his smile, the tenderness of his melodious yet manly voice, will be remembered by me till every vision of this changing scene are forgotten. The polished and fascinating ingenuousness of his manners contributed not a little to enliven our promenade. He sang with exquisite taste, and the tones of his voice, breaking on the silence of the night, have often appeared to my entranced senses like more than mortal melody." He was free and "offhand" in his manners, but already had acquired the coarse language which was in vogue among the bloods and bucks of the day.* He was considered to be a young man of great accomplishments and education, and when he chose could assume that pleasant graciousness and interest in the person he was addressing for which the present heir to the crown is remarkable. He could speak French, Italian, and German with ease, and particularly affected a knowledge of all points relating to art and the *belles lettres*. He took pleasure in coming forward as arbiter on a question of a disputed quotation or classical allusion. For music he seems to have had a genuine relish, and he could sing and play respectably. The following description of his gifts is amusing, as a specimen of the "valet" style of panegyric, which admiration for the Prince invariably inspired.

"He could perform on the violoncello, having been instructed by a well-known professor named Crossdill; Parsons, of the King's band, taught him singing, and it must be said that he was considered to have a good voice, and could take his part in a glee or catch.† He was an assiduous patron of the various musical

* Walpole, "Last Journals," ii. 458, for a specimen.

† He is the reputed author of the second verse of the glee of "The Happy Fellow," "I'll ne'er," etc., and also of a verse in the song, "By the gaily circling glass," which he was accustomed to sing in his convivial moments with great effect.—Huish, i. 46. As a critic he could not rank so high, to take as a specimen his comparison of Crossdill and Cervetto. Speaking of the performances of these eminent men, his royal highness was heard to say, that the execution of Crossdill had all the fire and

societies, the Concerts of Ancient Music, for which he selected pieces, the Philharmonic, the opera; though from the Ancient Concerts he withdrew, owing to a slight shown to a lady in whom he was interested."

Unfortunately, in company with these elegant and praiseworthy tastes were found others of a low and vulgar description. He took delight in "rowdy" escapades and riotous jests, later to be in high fashion, and described in works like "Tom and Jerry" and "The Finish." He was fond of Ranelagh and Vauxhall, where he was often engaged in scuffles and broils, being prudent enough, however, to retain a number of "bruisers" to attend him, and rescue him if overpowered; for among other accomplishments he had been instructed by Angelo in pugilism. In the pleasures of the turf, owing to the strict injunctions of the King, he could not yet indulge himself.

Thus equipped, this gay young prince "came upon town," and, it may be conceived, stimulated the current of gaiety and extravagance. Balls and masquerades of the most brilliant kind attended his course. His wardrobe alone for a single year was said to have cost ten thousand pounds. Under his direction, one of the most brilliant masquerades was given at a club in St. James's Street, opened by the Prince and the Duchess of Devonshire. At these entertainments the fairest and most aristocratic dames were not ashamed to mix with courtesans who enjoyed the royal patronage; indeed, there was a general obsequious acceptance of public scandal which now seems incredible.

This new and riotous mode, as may be conceived, was to be a source of fresh trial to the King, and widened the breach between him and his son. The hopeful prince showed his disrespect and contempt by ignoring the officers who had been so recently placed about his person, studiously affecting never to address them; he looked on them as spies set to watch and report him. To Lord Chesterfield he made the objection "that he had hanged his tutor, the unfortunate Dr. Dodd," that he had for patron so depraved a person as Lord Sandwich. Yet, not long after, with characteristic uncertainty, he soon took as violent a *penchant* to this very nobleman, and drove him publicly in the park in his own chaise.*

brilliancy of the sun, whilst that of Cervetto had all the sweetness and mildness of the moonbeam. It was the delight of his royal highness to attend the Italian Opera, merely to hear Cervetto's accompaniments of the recitatives, which were acknowledged to be unrivalled. "It was a banquet for the ear," he said, "at which the appetite increased in proportion as it was administered."

* See Walpole, "Last Journals," ii. 451.

The town, indeed, was full of stories of his wild doings. No sooner had the King gone to bed, than he and his brother broke out of the palace in search of riotous adventures. One of these outrageous scenes may be taken as a specimen of the rest. One night, with his chief favourite and the worthy Duke of Cumberland, he set off for Blackheath, to sup with Lord Chesterfield, where the whole company presently got so drunk that the Prince was obliged to lie down. One of the party actually proposed a toast, "A short reign to the King," which the inebriated Prince felt was in bad taste, or perhaps an affront to himself. He rose and gave his father's health. The next exploit was to let loose a large and ferocious dog, with whom Mr. George Pitt, a man of uncommon strength, engaged in a fight, attempting, we are told, "to tear out his tongue." The enraged animal broke from him, flew at Mr. Windham, tore his arm, then mangled a footman, on which the whole party assailed him *en masse*. He had just seized the coat of the Prince when he was felled to the ground. At six in the morning the Prince was setting off for home, when his host, attempting to light him to his coach, fell down the steps, and all but fractured his skull. The story of this orgie soon got abroad.* The poor king was so shocked at the prospect that all this opened that he fell ill, and told the Duke of Gloucester that he had not slept for ten nights. But there were other family discussions raging which helped to trouble the unhappy monarch's slumbers. His brother, the Duke of Cumberland, a vicious and ill-conditioned prince, was now at war with the King, whom he insulted in public and private. He and his wife acquired a sort of influence over the heir-apparent, and fostered and encouraged his excesses. The duke would insolently ignore the King and go to the Queen's House every day to see his son. The King would complain that if he met the duke, the latter would take off his hat and turn on his heel. "I am ashamed," he would say piteously, "to see my brother paying court to my son." With the same object the duke would go to the Court balls, though not invited. He himself gave a ball to the Prince, which the King forbade his son's retainers to attend. The duke then invited his household to a dinner-party to indemnify them, at which the King again forbade their attendance.

* Walpole would appear to have written these lines in the papers :

Then stupid rise, and with the rising sun

Drive the high car, a second Phaeton.

Let these exploits your fertile wit evince ;

Drunk as a lord and happy as a prince.

"Last Journals," ii. 459.

We can scarcely credit the story told by Mr. Walpole, that within earshot of the King the duke and his nephew talked of him in the grossest terms. People wondered why his Majesty did not forbid the graceless pair to see each other; but he frankly owned that he feared his son would not obey him. The duke as frankly owned that, by means of his influence over the Prince, he meant to intimidate his sovereign into recognising the duchess.*

At the Queen's drawing-room the Prince drank too much, and in consequence was seized with a fever, which seems to have brought him to a penitent spirit, for he told Lord Graham that he never thought of the night at Lord Chesterfield's without sorrow, and that he was determined never to be drunk again.

Indeed, the treatment with which the King had to put up with amounted to outrage. Out hunting, neither would speak to him. So once, at an out-of-the-way village, they both seized on the only postchaise, and left the King to get back to London as he could. If he asked the Prince to dine, he, with studious contempt, always arrived one hour late, so that all the servants saw the father waiting for the son. Such were the King's complaints to the Duke of Gloucester, and reported by him to Walpole.

To pander to their nephew's tastes, the Duke and Duchess of Cumberland kept a faro-bank, and when he did not go out brought *confrères* to the Queen's House, where he lived. They even pursued worse excesses. But soon the fickle youth grew tired of this violent friendship, even though the duke had carried him to common places of debauchery, where they got dead drunk and were often carried home in that condition. The uncle had grown familiar, and was so free as to call him "Taffy," in allusion to his Principality. The Prince haughtily begged that he might not be addressed in such fashion, but without the least effect.

A friendship which he had contracted with a foreign visitor who came to England—the Duke of Chartres, the notorious "Egalité"—was not without its effect. With this companion—the most depraved man in Europe—he appeared at every place of amusement and public resort. The Frenchman flattered him by copying his dress, and pressed him to visit him in Paris, a plan which the Prince pressed with passionate eagerness on his father. The latter refused his consent, but discreetly proposed a visit to Hanover instead.

The Duke of Chartres's grooms, costumes, and equipages were all English, and heralded that Anglomania which set in on the eve of the Revolution. Other friends of a more respectable type—

* Walpole, "Last Journals," ii. 457.

and it must be said that from the first he always cultivated the society of men of parts and position—were Lords Rawdon, Hastings, Cornwallis, Hugh Seymour, the Dukes of Norfolk, Bedford, Devonshire, with Messrs. Erskine, Coke, Crewe, Fitzpatrick, Francis, Grey, Plumer, Pigot, Taylor, Windham, and others. The most familiar and intimate of all was Fox, who, combining wit, talents, and influence to an extraordinary degree, was for more than twenty years to exercise much influence, and at the present time held him by a sort of fascination.

In the following year, 1728, the King, had been compelled to dismiss the North ministry, and in a sort of agony of reluctance to accept Lord Rockingham and the Whigs. A year later the death of this nobleman had brought Fox into power as foreign secretary. Fox, as is well known, was particularly odious to the King, who looked on him as the counsellor and instigator of his son's excesses. It may be conceived what torture it was to the father's heart to find the son whom he could not control thus fortified by the assistance of a man whose power was based on his subjection. The humiliation before the nation, to whom this unfortunate relation was notorious, made the matter worse. It will be seen how envenomed was the hostility to the Crown and the Government of the Crown, from the significant fact that Fox and his friends wore a dress copied exactly from Washington's uniform,* and by the "parricide joy" of a patriot duke—no doubt the Duke of Portland, who actually gloated over the loss of an English ship of war sent to America.† At this time Mr. Fox was about thirty-three years old—a brilliant debauched creature, the idol of his friends, already too a ruined gambler, and his health impaired by excess." His features, in themselves harsh, dark, and saturnine, like those of Charles II., from whom he descended in the maternal line, derived nevertheless a sort of majesty from the additions of two black and shaggy eyebrows. Even these features, however seemingly repulsive, yet did not readily assume the expression of anger or of enmity, whereas they frequently, and as it were naturally, relaxed into a smile the effect of which became irresistible. His figure—broad, heavy, and inclined to corpulency, appeared destitute of all elegance or grace, except the portion conferred on it by the emanations of intellect, which at times diffused over his whole person when he was speaking with the most impassioned animation. In his dress he had become negligent to a degree."‡ Such was the friend of the young prince, for whom he was now affectionately "my dear

* Wraxall, "Hist. Mem." ii. 229. Third edition.

† "Life and Letters of Sir G. Elliot," i. 74.

‡ Wraxall, *sup.*

Charles," and over whom he exercised the most unbounded influence. At this time he was lodging in St. James's Street, so as to be near the great gaming club, Brookes's; and here of a morning, when he had just left his bed and was making his toilette, was he obsequiously attended by the young heir to the crown, together with a crowd of followers and admirers, "all his disciples." Walpole describes the scene. "His bristly black person and shagged breast, quite open, and rarely purified by any ablutions, was wrapped in a foul linen night-gown, and his bushy hair dishevelled. In these cynic weeds and with epicurean good humour did he dictate his politics, and in this school did the heir of the crown attend his lessons and imbibe them." *

Fox's followers were quite unrestrained in their conversation about the sovereign. At Brookes's they laid wagers on his life, and it is not unlikely that the irreverent talk at the club was reported to the King as having been uttered at that morning levée in the presence of his son. The graceless youth, when the King was resisting the Whig ministry then forced upon him, was heard to exclaim in the public rooms of the palace, "that his father had not yet agreed to take them, but he should be made to agree to it." Indecent as this was, some excuse might be found in the rebelliousness of youth, and the inconsiderate folly which made him the tool of counsellors old enough to have known what was becoming. But party passions were intensified by the attitude of the King, who was contending with his own subjects. If the King joined their enemies, they held it to be quixotic not to use the son against the father.

It was, therefore, at this time that the unhappy monarch conceived that bitter hatred to Fox which, as was well said, in time became "a rankling ulcer." In his anguish he implored the rough and surly Thurlow to tell him what to do. The reply was that "he would never have peace till he put both in the Tower." Such at least was the story. On the other hand, at a supper given by the Duchess of Cumberland, the Prince called out aloud that he hoped "that d——d fellow, the chancellor, would be turned out."† This influence of Fox, disastrous because that of a clever, much-admired man, was to endure for many years, though it became enfeebled as the Prince's character was revealed. Not unexpectedly do we find that within a few years "the d——d fellow" was to become the Prince's trusted counsellor and choice companion.

His friends were now installed in office. To what a degree Fox had become his *âme damnée* will be seen from a few letters

* Walpole, "Last Journals," ii. 599.

† Ibid. ii. 600.

written by the young prince to his friend. In the first there is almost a nervous and passionate eagerness to show his affection and devotion.

THE PRINCE OF WALES TO MR. FOX.

"Wednesday evening, 10 October.

"DEAR FOX,

"Nothing could give me more satisfaction than the message you were so good as to send me this morning. You know how sincerely you have my good wishes, and therefore will be convinced that I shall rejoice not a little if I again see you in administration, as I look upon it as the most fortunate event that can happen to us all. I mean not only to myself in particular, but to the nation in general. With respect to your friendly kindness to me I shall ever be happy to acknowledge it with the gratitude it so justly deserves. I will not take up any more of your time at present than merely to ask you whether it will be convenient to you or not, my calling upon you between court (if it is over in proper time) and dinner to-morrow. You may depend upon my coming the moment I am released. I can assure you no one can be more anxious than I am to see you at the present moment, as no one has your interest more sincerely at heart, and I hope you will ever look upon me as

"Your most affectionate Friend,

"GEORGE P."

In others will be noted a boyish anxiety to be of use, and to receive direction from his friend.

THE PRINCE OF WALES TO MR. FOX.

"Queen's House, 4 o'clock.

"DEAR CHARLES,

"I am now returned home, and if you have anything particular you wish to say to me, I am ready either to come to you or to receive you at the Queen's House, whichever is most convenient to you. But if you should have nothing to say to me, I intend going out of town early this evening.

"I am most sincerely yours,

"GEORGE P."

THE SAME.

" $\frac{3}{4}$ past 2 o'clock.

"DEAR CHARLES,

"I am waiting for you at your own house; pray come directly if you can, as I wish very much to speak to you. I will not detain you three minutes.

"Yours most truly,

"GEORGE P.

"If you have not got your own carriage you had better take somebody else's."

It is creditable to him that he did not forget his old tutor, and at the first opportunity used his interest for him.

THE SAME.

"Queen's House, 12 o'clock, Ap. 30, 1783.

"DEAR CHARLES, .

"I did not return home till it was too late to answer your kind letter last night. I cannot express to you how happy you made me by the contents of it, as I have always entertained the highest opinion of Dr. Cyril Jackson, and have always had the greatest friendship for him. You may easily conceive how much pleased I shall be at seeing him in so eligible a situation, and in a situation he must so wish for himself. Before I conclude, allow me to thank you, my dear Charles, for your kind attention to me on this and every other occasion, and believe me,

"Ever sincerely yours,

"GEORGE P."

CHAPTER V.

1783.

BUT now the formal emancipation of the Prince was at hand; in June, 1783, he wanted but a couple of months of being of age. He was to have a suitable establishment and an allowance voted by the nation, and, what his harassed father brought himself reluctantly to entertain, a recognised portion of authority and independence. It will be seen how painful this question must have been for the King, since an unfortunate turn in the political cards had placed its settlement in the power of the Prince's devoted friends, and of those whom the King disliked. As a matter of course these had made lavish promises to their young patron, and he might look for bountiful treatment at their hands. Already he was largely in debt, and it was natural that from his boon companions he should expect relief; but this was not to be done without a serious difficulty, and the question well-nigh overturned the new ministry.

The Shelburne party during their brief tenure of office had promised him the magnificent allowance of one hundred thousand pounds a year! When Fox came into power he felt himself bound to do as much, though he and the Duke of Portland and Lord Keppel were the only members of the Cabinet that favoured so extravagant a sum, Lord North and the rest being strongly opposed to it. When the matter came to be laid before the King, on June 2nd, he appeared to accept this plan, allowed it to be discussed by the ministers, and suffered the arrangement to be made for its being submitted to the House on the 16th. Suddenly on the 15th, when the duke came to make the final settlement for the following day, he announced that the ministry had thought it

better to make the allowance an addition to the Civil List, as being more palatable to the House of Commons. But he was thunder-struck to hear the King angrily declare that this was a departure from the first proposition, and that he therefore declined to sanction the business. The duke, alarmed, said that they would then go back to the first arrangement; when the King declared warmly that he had not changed his bad opinion of the ministry, that he disapproved of the whole. He proceeded to make a violent attack on them; with all their professions of economy, here they were, he said, ready "to sacrifice the public interests to the wishes of an ill-advised young man." Finally, he would never forgive or forget their conduct, and would therefore himself give out of his own slender allowance half the sum.

This burst produced no less astonishment than consternation. It really manifested not a movement of petulance, but the long pent-up agony of his subservience and hatred of his masters. It was obvious, too, that the stroke was politic enough, for he appeared to the nation as the patron of economy, and ready to sacrifice himself, while he held up the ministry as favouring extravagance and profligacy. A letter of Fitzpatrick's to Lord Ossory sets out the view of the party as to the treatment they had received : *

"June 17th, 1783.

"This letter will inform you of the fate of the present administration, and the short account of it is this: The King originally agreed that the whole business of the Prince of Wales's establishment should be settled by the Duke of Portland; and his first plan was that Parliament should be applied to for the whole £100,000. This was consented to. But upon further conversation it was thought that a part from Parliament, and a part from the Civil List, would be more palatable in the House of Commons. The Duke of Portland apprised the King of this in a letter the day before yesterday, in answer to which he wrote a very angry letter, complaining of the departure from the first proposal. In answer to this the Duke of Portland wrote, that he did not mean the latter should supersede the first plan, which he was ready to propose to Parliament. The King answered this by saying, that he had not changed his opinion of their (his ministers') conduct by this letter; that he totally disapproved of

* Here are exactly the tactics pursued by the King when, in 1806, he dismissed another ministry equally odious to him. The parallel is curious. The same devices were adopted by his son when the Catholic question was submitted in 1829.

the whole of their proposal; that he could not think of burthening the public, but was ready to give £50,000 a year from the Civil List, which he thought sufficient; and that he found, notwithstanding all the professions of the present ministers for economy, they were ready to sacrifice the public interests to the wishes of an ill-advised young man; that he would never forget or forgive the conduct of the present ministers towards him. This, we suppose, has been settled with the enemy, and no measures are yet determined upon; but as we have a good attendance of friends in town, the wish is to do something to-morrow, and at least to die handsomely. Everybody thinks they cannot form any government that can have the appearance of lasting. This is coming to you by express, to hope you will come at any rate for to-morrow, though it is quite uncertain what may be done.

“Yours,

“R. F.”

The secret of this sudden change in the King's tactics is thus explained: A day or two after he had seen the Duke of Portland, Lord Temple, the Lord Lieutenant, arrived suddenly from Ireland, and to whom, as a chosen confidant, the King revealed his trouble, imploring his aid. But Lord Temple shall himself relate what took place. “He spoke,” says Lord Temple, “with strong expressions of resentment and disgust of his ministers, and of personal abhorrence of Lord North, whom he charged with treachery and ingratitude of the blackest nature. He then stated the proposition made to him by the Duke of Portland for the annual allowance of £100,000 to his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales. I gave to him, very much at length, my opinion of such a measure, and of the certain consequences of it: in all which, as may reasonably be supposed, his Majesty ran before me, and stated with strong disgust the manner in which it was opened to him—as a thing decided, and even drawn up in the shape of a message, to which his signature was desired as a matter of course, to be brought before Parliament the next day. To all this he assented; but declared his intention to resist, at all events and hazards, the proposition for this enormous allowance to his Royal Highness, of whose conduct he spoke with much dissatisfaction. He asked, what he might look to if upon this refusal the ministry should resign: and I observed, that, not having had the opportunity of consulting my friends, I could only answer that their resignation was a proposition widely differing from their dismissal, and that I did not see the impossibility of accepting his administration in such a con-

tingency, provided the supplies and public bills were passed, so as to enable us to prorogue the Parliament. To all this he assented, and declared his intention of endeavouring to gain time, that the business of Parliament might go on; and agreed with me that such a resignation was improbable, and that it would be advisable not to dismiss them unless some very particular opportunity presented itself.”*

Such was the rather disingenuous game played by the King. But he was not prepared for what followed, though he fancied he might indulge his feelings in thwarting the ministers. The latter, indignant at such treatment—for they declared that the King had actually agreed to their whole scheme—insisted on resigning, being pressed by the Prince to do so, who had nearly got a fever from disappointment and annoyance. It was soon shown to the King that such a step would leave him in the helplessness and contemptible position of having to sue to them to come back. The cautious Scotchman saw it would not do, and Lord Bute shrank from making himself odious to the Prince, as he felt that the whole change would be set down to him. Lord Thurlow was too sagacious not to see the danger. “This shiftiness in high places engendered an equal shiftiness in those who depended on the King’s favour, and the double-dealing of Lord Weymouth, the son’s officer, was specially noted. The most shallow of men, he was the one in whom the King had most confidence. Into his bosom he poured all his complaints of his son’s behaviour, and from him he heard welcome abuse of that son.” It was remarked, Walpole adds, that not a day passed without a secret interview between this nobleman and the King, though the former was actually holding office under Fox and his friends. This subserviency had attracted the suspicions of the Prince, who gave due notice to his friend. Certainly here was an edifying situation.

THE PRINCE OF WALES TO MR. FOX.

“Monday night, $\frac{1}{2}$ past 12 o’clock.

“DEAR CHARLES,

“When I left the Queen’s House this evening, Weymouth was with the King. I wish you would tell me in a short note how you interpret his frequent visits, and let me know whether you have heard anything fresh this evening.

“I am most sincerely yours,

“G. P.”

* “Court and Cabinets of George III.,” p. 305.

The King's device therefore was not to succeed. He became almost terror-stricken at the sudden embarrassment that was opening before him. When, on the 16th, the ministers had met to arrange their resignation, the Duke of Portland was sent for to the King. In an agony of tears, he fell on the duke's neck and owned that he had gone too far. He implored him to rescue him, which the duke was well disposed to do, for his own sake.*

The difficulty was now small; a retreat was to be managed, as the ministry was pledged to the Prince, and he, as we have seen, had set his heart on the arrangement. It will be found how completely he was in the hands of his friend Fox, and how ductile he was. The skilful Loughborough was the first to suggest this mode of operation. He wrote to Fox:

"Bedford Square, Tuesday, 6 p.m.

"DEAR SIR,

" . . . I really do not see that there are two lines to take, whether successful or not. Submission for the present is the only reasonable course. But it would be much better, and much handsomer, if it were possible to dispose his Royal Highness to give way respectfully, and with a dutiful remonstrance profess himself ready to show his obedience, and to wait until his Majesty entertains another view of the matter. If my idea appears just to you, would it not be of great consequence that you should, as soon as possible, try to persuade the Prince of Wales to make a virtue of necessity, and gain the public favour by declining cheerfully any appearance of contest, which makes better ground for him hereafter and can do him no prejudice at present? Excuse me throwing out thus hastily what has occurred to me, and believe me

"Most sincerely yours, &c.,
"L."

With what good grace the Prince yielded will be seen from his letters to Fox:

"Queen's House, 1 o'clock.

"DEAR CHARLES,

"I have a thousand excuses to make to you for not having answered your letter immediately, but I am only this instant awake, and therefore have only just had time to read your letter. I saw

* Mr. Jesse, in his admirable "Memoirs of George III.," speaks of the King's "independent and resolute conduct" (ii. 437); but the reader can judge whether it deserves such a compliment.

the Duchess of Portland yesterday, and took the liberty of desiring her Grace to deliver a message from me to the Duke of Portland, desiring him, if it was not inconvenient to him, to allow me to come to him to-morrow at eleven, instead of to-day. I ought to have explained this to you at Carlisle's when I desired you to meet me in Downing Street, on Sunday, at eleven o'clock, but it really quite slipped out of my memory. I must therefore entreat you to clear up the matter to the Duke of Portland, and make all proper apologies for me. I cannot, however, conclude without seizing the opportunity of thanking you for the part you have taken in bringing this essential business to me so near a conclusion, which, I can assure you, I shall never forget as long as I live.

"I remain, my dear Charles,

"Ever most sincerely yours,

"GEORGE P.

"P.S.—You may depend upon seeing me to-morrow at eleven."

"Queen's House, June 18th, 1783.

"DEAR CHARLES,

"After what has already passed, I did not require this additional proof of your friendship and attachment; and you will see by a letter I have this instant written to the Duke of Portland, how ready I am to take your advice, and that I leave it entirely to the Cabinet.

"Yours most sincerely,

"GEORGE P."

"Cumberland House, $\frac{1}{4}$ past 9 o'clock.

"DEAR CHARLES,

"I have this instant received your kind letter. I am most exceedingly sensible of the kind and friendly attention you have shown me throughout the whole of this business, which is of so much importance to my happiness. Should anything arrive that you wish me to be immediately apprised of, pray send it to the Queen's House. I shall leave a servant there to bring me any letter that may come from you, wherever I am. James Luttrell I sent an express for immediately, but have not as yet sent to Lord Herbert, and according to your advice, the step not being as yet taken, I shall not send for him at all.

"I remain, dear Charles,

"Ever most sincerely yours,

"GEORGE P."

By the 17th all was happily arranged, as the following extracts from Fox's letters will show:*

MR. FOX TO LORD NORTHINGTON.

"St. James's, June 19th, 1783.

"DEAR NORTHINGTON,

"There is reason to think that the storm is for the present dissipated, and therefore I hope you have not mentioned to anyone, except Windham, my last letter. The Prince has behaved in the handsomest manner, and his reasonableness under the hardest usage, is likely to keep everything quiet; for how long is a question which cannot for some days at least be decided. I hope in a few days to be able to write to you a detailed account of the whole business, but really have not now time.

"Yours ever,

"C. J. Fox."

"As to the opinion of our having gained strength by it," wrote Fox to the same friend on July 17th, "the only rational foundation for such an opinion is, that this event has proved that there subsists no such understanding between the King and Lord Temple as to enable them to form an administration, because if there did, it is impossible but they must have seized an occasion in many respects so fortunate for them. They would have had on their side the various cries of paternal authority, economy, moderate establishment, mischief-making between father and son, and many other plausible topics. The King has certainly carried one point against us. The truth is that, excepting the Duke of Portland and Lord Keppel, there was not one minister who would have fought with any heart in this cause. I could see clearly from the beginning, long before the difficulties appeared, that Lord North and Lord John, though they did not say so, thought the large establishment extravagant, and you will, I am sure, agree with me that to fight a cause, where the latter especially was not hearty, would have been a most desperate measure. Under all these circumstances there appeared to me no alternative in common sense but to yield with the best grace possible, if the Prince of Wales could be brought to be of that mind. I believe he was naturally very averse to it, but Colonel Lake and others whom he most trusts persuaded him to it, and the intention of doing so came from him to us spontaneously. If it had not, I own I should have felt myself bound to follow his Royal Highness's line upon the subject, though I know that by so doing I should destroy the ministry in the worst possible way, and subject

* "Memorials of Fox," ii. 109.

myself to the imputation of the most extreme wrongheadedness. I shall always therefore consider the Prince's having yielded a most fortunate event, and shall always feel myself proportionally obliged to him and to those who advised him. In short, the only thing that ought to be said is, that it was not a point upon which ministers ought to dispute his Majesty's pleasure, and that they were the better enabled to yield by the generosity of the Prince, who was most ready to give up his own interest rather than be the cause of any confusion, or appear to be wanting in duty to the King."

But it will be noted that there was an almost too great exuberance of goodwill on the side of the Prince, which, perhaps, was owing to a weakness of character.

The King, it would thus appear, had done both Fox and the Duke of Portland—"my son's ministry," he called it—some injustice in supposing that they had "set his son against him." Fox at his very first interview vindicated himself, and protested he had never said a word which he would not have been glad that the King should have heard, while the Duke of Portland, during the course of his trouble, had written a letter to the Prince, conjuring him to submit to his father; on which the King was charmed, and said "he did not know the duke was so honest a man."*

Accordingly, on June 28rd, Lord John Cavendish, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, brought down the following royal message to the House: "His Majesty, reflecting on the propriety of a separate establishment for his dearly-beloved son, the Prince of Wales, recommends the consideration thereof to this House, relying on the experienced zeal and affection of his faithful Commons for such aid towards making that establishment as shall appear consistent with a due attention to the circumstances of his people, every addition to whose burthens his Majesty feels with the most sensible concern.—G.R." And on the 25th he introduced the matter in a speech, showing that the King's Civil List was about nine hundred thousand pounds a year, of which fifty thousand were set apart for the King, the remainder being scarcely sufficient for all the claims that were on it. His Majesty, however, was willing to supply the whole of the allowance for his son, viz. fifty thousand pounds a year, provided the House voted a sum of thirty thousand pounds for debts, and as much more for an outfit. His son would, besides, have the revenues of the Duchy of Cornwall, the whole giving him an income of about sixty-two or sixty-three thousand a year. This,

* Walpole, "Last Journals," ii. 631.

at the present value of money, was equal to about eighty thousand a year.

This moderate addition was opposed by Pitt, who reminded Lord North of his promises, given some years before, that there should be no addition to the Civil List. However, the whole was voted unanimously. The legislators little dreamed what painful discoveries were in store for them, and how, for years to come, the "Prince's allowance" and "the Prince's debts" would be a thorn in their sides.

In this fashion, the King, who had a certain cleverness, or cunning as some described it, contrived to secure popularity. But there were no lack of warnings that the insufficiency of the allowance would lead to future difficulties. The implied suggestion here was significant; viz. that the income should be proportioned to the extravagant temper of the recipient, and not to the general standard of what was becoming in the case of a person of his rank. Considering what the value of money was a hundred years ago, it was certainly a suitable provision.

CHAPTER VI.

1783—1784.

THE PRINCE OF WALES came of age in August, 1783, an event celebrated by festive rejoicings. By this time he was established at Carlton House, the old residence of the Princess Dowager, and which had been tenantless since her death. It was discovered to be out of repair, and unfortunately for himself and for the nation, offered itself to the Prince as a fitting object for the display of his elegant tastes and reckless expenditure.

For nearly forty years it was destined to swallow up enormous sums in reconstruction and alterations, and when these were completed after nearly thirty years' labour, was capriciously razed to the ground. The Duchess of Devonshire and Lady Melbourne were consulted by the young prince on the furniture and decorations, while Holland, later to be the architect of one of the Drury Lane Theatres, with one Nuovosielchi, furnished plans for the alterations. This was but the beginning of that building mania—the most ruinous of passions—in which he indulged to the last hour of his life, and of which Buckingham Palace, the Brighton Pavilion, and the Ivy Cottages at Virginia Water are the rather indifferent results. On the 11th of the same month he took his seat in the House of Peers, subscribed the declaration of supremacy, the oath of allegiance, etc., and, on the occasion of a motion relating to a proclamation for preventing seditious meetings and writings made a speech. He said, “that on a question of such magnitude, he should be deficient in his duty as a member of Parliament, unmindful of the respect he owed to the constitution, and inattentive to the welfare, the peace, and the happiness of the

people, if he did not state to the world what was his opinion on the present question. He was educated in the principles, and he should ever preserve them, of a reverence for the constitutional liberties of the people; and, as on those constitutional principles the happiness of that people depended, he was determined, as far as his interest could have any force, to support them. The matter in issue was, in fact, whether the constitution was or was not to be maintained; whether the wild ideas of theory were to conquer the wholesome maxims of established practice; and whether those laws under which we had flourished for such a series of years were to be subverted by a reform unsanctioned by the people. As a person nearly and dearly interested in the welfare, and he should emphatically add, the happiness and comfort of the people, it would be treason to the principles of his mind if he did not come forward and declare his disapprobation of those seditious publications which had occasioned the motion now before their Lordships; his interest was connected with that of the people; they were so inseparable, that unless both parties concurred, happiness could not exist. On this great, this solid basis, he grounded the vote which he meant to give, and that vote should unequivocally be for a concurrence with the Commons in the address they had resolved upon. His royal highness spoke, we are assured, in a manner that called not only for the attention, but the admiration of the House, and the following words were remarkably energetic: "I exist by the love, the friendship, and the benevolence of the people, and their cause I will never forsake as long as I live." The Prince then concluded by distinctly saying: "I give my most hearty assent to the motion for concurring in this wise and salutary address."*

During the progress of the India Bill he made himself conspicuous by appearing at the debates in the House of Commons, and showed his sympathies and partisanship so strongly that it was urged during this perilous discussion, that "if the great personage in question, not content with merely listening to the debates, should, on any occasion, testify by his behaviour or gesticulation, while in the House, a predilection or partiality for any set of men, such marks of his preference would be unbecoming, and might operate as a means of influence." Lord North, however, uttered a panegyric on the Prince's "eminent abilities," expressing his personal gratification in seeing "a prince, to whom the country must look up as its hope, thus practically becoming acquainted with the nature of this limited government, rather than taking up the hearsay of the hour, or looking for his know-

* Huish, i. 86.

ledge to flatterers." Mr. Fox characterised the charges as "pernicious and ridiculous alike, adopted by men no less the enemies of free discussion in that House than the calumniators of the motives of a distinguished personage, whose whole spirit was honour." "Was," he asked, "the mind which might, at any hour, by the common chances of mortality, be summoned to the highest duties allotted to man, to be left to learn them by accident? For his part he rejoiced to see that distinguished personage disdaining to use the privileges of his rank and keep aloof from the debates of that House. He rejoiced to see him manfully coming among them, to imbibe a knowledge of the constitution within the walls of the Commons of England. He, for his part, saw nothing in the circumstances which had called down so much volunteer eloquence." At the first division he had even cast his vote for his friends, but finding that this inflamed the King, he acted on the judicious advice of Mr. Fox and abstained from further part in the contest.* As the sovereign had become himself a partisan, and was secretly plotting with some of his subjects to overthrow his own ministers, the praise of moderation seems to be due to the heir-apparent.† General Fitzpatrick, however, writing excitedly on the night of their defeat, says that "the Prince voted in the minority."

It has been often told and retold how, within a few hours, the ministry were ignominiously required to deliver up their seals, and what popular execration followed them into retirement. This extended to the Prince of Wales, who, when he appeared at the theatre, was hissed. After this rout of his friends he fell ill, it was thought from mortification, and Mrs. Montagu learned that he had an abscess in his side and was suffering much. He soon rallied, and, when the general election took place, joined eagerly in the struggle that followed, and which ended so disastrously for his friends. Fox, "the man of the people," had now to pass through the critical Westminster election, in which the fascinating Georgiana, Duchess of Devonshire, took so conspicuous a share. Carlton House became the candidate's committee rooms. The fair canvasser—to whom a stolen picture has given a popularity that she might otherwise never have enjoyed—was then in all her beauty, and much admired by the Prince. One who knew her, Sir N. Wraxall, draws this pleasing portrait of her :

"Her personal charms constituted her smallest pretension to universal admiration; nor did her beauty consist, like that of the Gunnings, in regularity of features and faultless formation

* Moore, "Life of Sheridan," i. 403.

† It has been stated that he attended Cabinet Councils, but this is doubtful.

of limbs and shape—it lay in the amenity and graces of her deportment, in her irresistible manners, and the seduction of her society. Her hair was not without a tinge of red ; and her face, though pleasing, yet had it not been illuminated by her mind, might have been considered as an ordinary countenance. Descended in the fourth degree lineally from Sarah Jennings, the wife of John Churchill, Duke of Marlborough, she resembled the portraits of that celebrated woman. In addition to the external advantages which she had received from nature and fortune, she possessed an ardent temper, susceptible of deep as well as strong impressions ; a cultivated understanding, illuminated by a taste for poetry and the fine arts ; much sensibility, not exempt perhaps from vanity and coquetry. To her mother, the Dowager Countess Spencer, she was attached with more than common filial affection, of which she exhibited pecuniary proofs rarely given by a daughter to her parent. Nor did she display less attachment to her sister Lady Duncannon.

“Lady Duncannon, however inferior to the duchess in elegance of mind and in personal beauty, equalled her in sisterly love. During the month of July, 1811, a very short time before the decease of the late Duke of Devonshire, I visited the vault in the principal church of Derby, where repose the remains of the Cavendish family. As I stood contemplating the coffin which contained the ashes of that admired female, the woman who accompanied me pointed out the relics of a bouquet which lay upon the lid, nearly collapsed into dust. ‘That nosegay,’ said she, ‘was brought here by the Countess of Besborough, who had designed to place it with her own hands on her sister’s coffin. But, overcome by her emotions on approaching the spot, she found herself unable to descend the steps conducting to the vault. In an agony of grief she knelt down on the stones, as nearly over the place occupied by the corpse as I could direct, and there deposited the flowers, enjoining me the performance of an office to which she was unequal. I fulfilled her wishes.”

The Prince’s thoughts were even thus early turning towards domestic repose, and it would almost seem that so early as 1783 he was thinking of the serious step he was presently to take. At a dinner-party at Lord Lewisham’s the Prince drank very hard—a not unusual incident with him—and then fell into a sort of dejected mood, in which he bewailed his condition, said he envied the Dukes of Devonshire and Rutland, who were at liberty to wed two clever women whom they liked. For his part, he supposed that “he should be forced to marry some ugly German.” Turning then to Rigby, then Master of the Rolls and a humorist, he put the significant question to

him: "What would he advise him to do?" "Faith, sir," was the reply, "I am not yet drunk enough to give advice to a Prince of Wales about marrying;" an answer commended as one of the best, even to a question of this kind. For, as Walpole says, there were lots of fools who thought themselves sober enough to advise him on whatever subject he consulted them on. It showed, however, what was in his mind at this time.

When the election was over, Fox was carried in a chair adorned with laurels through the chief streets of the West End, and the gates of Carlton House being thrown wide open, the whole cavalcade defiled through in compliment to the new member's august patron. It was an odd procession. A banner was carried in honour of the duchess, with the inscription: "Sacred to Female Patriotism;" Mr. North, Mr. Adam, and others, being observed to be mounted on the braces of Fox's carriage. The Prince, attended by a crowd of friends, appeared on the steps, while Fox made a brief harangue. On the following day, May 18th, he determined to celebrate the victory by a noonday fête in the gardens of his house, to which all the rank, beauty, and talent of the Opposition were invited. The grounds were separated only by a wall from the road that led from St. James's Palace to the Houses of Parliament, and it was noted that the King passed by in procession to open the session, and could see the festival going on. On the same night the triumphant party repaired to Lower Grosvenor Street, to an entertainment, or rather revel, given by the fair and captivating Mrs. Crewe, where the ladies all appeared, arrayed like the gentlemen, in buff and blue. The Prince of course attended, wearing the same colours, and after supper rose to give the well-known toast—"True blue, and Mrs. Crewe!" It was received with rapture, the lady, with the same spirit but less point, acknowledging the compliment in the phrase: "True blue, and all of you!"

Speeches were made on this happy occasion, Fox proposing the Prince's health in glowing terms, professing his "gratitude for the manner in which his royal highness has been pleased to give his countenance to me and to my cause. It is a circumstance of pride and honour, particularly dear to me, that in pursuing the interests of the people I have at the same time gained the approbation of the Prince. I assure his Royal Highness that his favour and kindness have made the deepest impression on my mind; and my return to him shall be, to make it the study of my life never to counsel his Royal Highness without having equally in view the interests of the Crown and the people—interests which cannot be severed without injury to both."

The Prince replied: "I will not at present speak of my private regard for Mr. Fox; I have entered into his interests from a conviction, not only that his talents are the brightest in the empire, but that his principles are the best, and his motives the purest; and I assure him that the prejudices of those who do not know him shall never alter my personal or political attachment."*

Nor was this all, the Prince himself celebrated the victory at Carlton House by one of the most magnificent fêtes within recollection. Nothing that luxury or taste could devise was absent, and, with an affectation of refined politeness almost inconsistent with the coarse manners of the time, the gentlemen, including the host himself, waited on the ladies at table. It was said by those who had often seen him in society, "that not even Louis XIV. himself could have eclipsed him in a ball-room," or while doing the honours of his own house; and certainly, even if sagacity were wanting, there was in all his conduct a certain gay readiness, a spirit and *savoir faire*, that was remarkable in one so young, the portraits at this time representing him as an interesting young man with a distinguished air, and a face almost juvenile for its glow and brilliancy.

These proceedings made the breach with his father complete. No notice was taken of his birthday at Windsor. He was considered to be leagued with the enemies of the Court. When Mr. Pitt was being drawn home in triumph from the City dinner, the shouting mob passed by Carlton House and stopped the carriage to hoot and groan, the minister having to look on. But when they passed by Brookes's Club they were met by an opposing crowd and a serious conflict took place, in which the minister had a narrow escape. The Prince complained to his father and required an apology, which he does not appear to have obtained.†

From these mortifications he turned to find relief in renewed gaieties and entertainments. The alterations at Carlton House—first of the series—were now completed, and the event was celebrated on March 10th by a ball. The dining-room, lit up by three magnificently-gilt chandeliers, the state-room, the ball-room and its orchestra, all excited admiration, abundant compliments being paid to the Prince's taste. This was followed on April 18th by a public breakfast at Carlton House. "About six hundred of the most distinguished persons in the kingdom

* Reported in a private letter from a gentleman who was present.—Lloyd, "Life and Reign," i. 122.

† Ibid, i. 126.

assembled in his beautiful gardens about two o'clock. The preparations on the occasion were full of magnificence. Covers were laid under nine extensive marquees for two hundred and fifty persons, and the entertainment consisted of the finest fruits of the season, confectioneries, ices, creams, and emblematical designs. Four bands of instruments were placed at different parts of the garden, and the company were entertained with various novelties of a comic kind, some of the performers at the theatres having attended for that purpose. After they had taken refreshments they rose to dance. A beautiful level, in the umbrage of a group of trees, was the spot which his royal highness selected for their ball, and he led down the country dances, first with the Duchess of Devonshire, and afterwards with one of the Lady Waldegraves. The company frequently changed their partners, and at times grouped off into cotillions. Among the ladies who danced was Mrs. Sheridan.* The breakfast concluded about six in the evening, when the company retired to dress."

"The Prince of Wales," says Mr. Raikes, "was a constant frequenter of the coteries and parties at Devonshire House, which was then the resort not only of the Opposition, but of all the wits and *beaux esprits* of the day. Sheridan, Grey, Whitbread, Lord Robert Spencer, Fox, Hare, Fitzpatrick, G. Selwyn, Prince Boothby, Sir H. Featherstonhaugh, and a host of names which I just remember in all the celebrity of *haut ton*, but now swept away by the hand of time, and, with only some few exceptions, leaving hardly a trace of recollection behind them. The Prince of Wales gave the young Count de Gramont a commission in his own regiment, the 10th Light Dragoons, of which the officers were generally his favourites and friends, among whom at that time were Poyntz, W. C. Churchill, Braddyll, Jack Lee, poor little Galway (who was burnt in his bed), Lords R. and C. Manners, and, though last not least, our friend G. Brummell, who was beginning to establish an intimacy with his royal colonel."

Indeed, it would be impossible to give an idea of the whirl of folly and extravagance in which the pleasure-loving young Prince now lived. A strange restlessness—never absent from what are called the "votaries of pleasure"—had taken possession of him; he was flying from house to house, dashing down to Brighton and up again, as fast as four horses could take him; now at Tunbridge Wells, or at the country mansion of some boon companion. Attended by a band of roysterers and his "three

* The lady just alluded to was then in all her bloom, and so "fast," as it is called now, that we hear of her being brought to hear a debate in the House of Commons dressed in man's clothes!

colonels," as they were called—Lake, Hulse, and St. Leger—he gamed and drank, frequented races and boxing-matches and the Gardens. Indeed, from this time to the end of his life, it might seem that clothes, carriages, and building houses were to form his favourite minor pleasures. Were a history of dress during the present and last century written, the changes he inspired should be noted. Carriages he also influenced with infinite variety. Mr. Thackeray indeed professed to see nothing but clothes, when he looked through his life, and his judgment may be worth quoting here, as one of the most mistaken and superficial of estimates. "I try and take him to pieces," he says, "and find silk stockings, padding, stays, a coat with frogs and a fur collar, a star and blue ribbon, a pocket-handkerchief prodigiously scented, one of Truefitt's best nutty-brown wigs reeking with oil, a set of teeth and a huge black stock, under-waistcoats, more under-waistcoats, and then nothing. I know of no sentiment that he ever distinctly uttered. Documents are published under his name, but people wrote them; private letters, but people spelt them. He put a great George P. or George R. at the bottom of the page and fancied he had written the paper. Some bookseller's clerk, some poor author, some man did the work—saw to the spelling, cleaned up the slovenly sentences, and gave the lax maudlin slipslop a sort of consistency. He must have had an individuality: the dancing-master whom he emulated, nay, surpassed, the wig-maker who curled his toupee for him, the tailor who cut his coats, had that. But, about George, one can get at nothing actual. That outside, I am certain, is pad and tailor's work." This view of character, founded on clothes, will be found to be a complete mistake. If he could devise these trifling things, he could turn his mind with effect to what was serious and important.

The phaeton, a favourite vehicle of his, is familiar to us from the caricatures. It was an unsightly thing, high, single-bodied, "all upon the fore wheels," says the agreeable author of "The Road," "and looking as if the hinder ones had nothing to do but to follow. This was commonly driven, by such as could afford it, with four horses in hand. Indeed, it may almost be said to have given birth to our gentleman-coachmanship, as well as to the well-known epigram:

"What can Tommy Onslow do?
He can drive a phaeton and two.
Can Tommy Onslow do no more?
Yes—he can drive a phaeton and four.

"The phaeton was succeeded by the no less classically yclept curricule—a carriage, when properly appointed, and followed by

two well-dressed and well-mounted grooms, of singular elegance certainly. It had a long run in the fashionable world, but being, like the phaeton, only calculated to carry two persons, and requiring never less than three horses, taxation and economy put an end to it. Then came the reign of the gig, and the stanhope, so named after the Honourable Fitzroy Stanhope, who planned it, succeeded the tilbury, so called from the well-known coach-maker; and the cost, without harness, of either may be about seventy pounds. Now, 'every dog has his day,' and so have our prevailing fashions. The buggy, stanhope, dennet, and tilbury have all, during some seasons past, been supplanted by the cabriolet. Fifty years ago the idea of putting a thoroughbred horse into harness would have been considered preposterous. In the carriages of our noblemen and gentlemen the long-tailed black or Cleveland bay—each one remove from the cart-horse—was the prevailing sort, and six miles an hour the extent of his pace."

Mr. Cyrus Redding recollected some strange varieties of vehicle—"Tim-whiskeys"—some that went on three wheels. The ladies went to Court in chairs. "There was a vis-à-vis for two, generally used by gentlemen going to court, superbly ornamented, and the horse richly caparisoned, with two or three footmen behind in gay liveries. There was the lofty phaeton generally used with four horses, high enough to look into a first-floor window. Some of these carriages had silver panellings. The Prince of Wales launched the most extravagant equipages, crowned with coronets and plumes, the panels fitted with paintings of squabby cupids and rustic nymphs."

He once saw the Prince arrayed in deep brown velvet, silver embroidered, cut-steel buttons, and a gold net thrown over all. In our own day fashion takes many freaks, but does not amuse itself by costly and whimsical changes in the patterns of clothes. Nor was it in these departments alone that he was the leader of the town. Indeed, at this period London was one of the gayest cities of Europe, and all the ranks of nobles and gentry, and in these ranks the old as well as the young, seemed to be frantically devoted to the pursuit of pleasure under its most showy and even theatrical forms; while the presence and encouragement of an ardent young prince, handsome, brilliant, and full of gaiety, set the ball rolling, as the phrase runs, with increased avidity. An interesting subject of inquiry would be to discover what taste has regulated the different forms of social amusement at particular eras. In our own day *al fresco* amusements, dancing and supping at gardens, masquerades and balls at public rooms, would seem not to be in keeping with the manners or tastes of

the day, but one hundred years ago we find the whole of London society rushing heedlessly after such pastimes. Private theatres were highly fashionable, one wing of many a noble mansion being built specially for this purpose; as well as the Almack's balls, the gardens at Ranelagh and Vauxhall, the splendid rooms at the first-named of these places, as well as at the Pantheon and Mrs. Cornelys', which were used for concerts, suppers, and masquerades—all of which offers the most curious contrast to the habits and tastes of our own day. It will not be out of place to give a review here of the pastimes with which the *beau monde* used to recreate itself.

The masquerade was then in the highest favour, and might be fairly considered "the note" of a popular taste; that is, the sort of reckless longing for adventure which such scenes offered. We find that there was such faith in this peculiar fashion that no less than three magnificent places of amusement were constructed to gratify it. The foremost was, of course, Ranelagh, the rotunda of which, with the magnificent suite of rooms attached and its handsome gardens, was one of the sights of London. Dr. Johnson's visit and his praise are well known. The superb circular room, its cupola supported in the centre by an arcade, while some fifty or sixty boxes for supping in ran round under galleries, offered on gala-nights a superb spectacle. People of the highest rank attended promenades, supped, listened to the music, sought and found adventures. The decorations of these places were of the best architecture. At old-fashioned watering-places abroad, such as Spa, we see some of these noble buildings, whose faded glories, tarnished gilding, and painted ceilings recall these old festive times.*

Mrs. Cornelys, a German, came to London about the year 1763, and opened a splendid building in Soho Square, for concerts and masquerades. Her entertainments became the rage, and we find Mr. Sterne, not long before his death, using his fashionable interest to secure tickets for friends. After many vicissitudes, the fine rooms passed into the possession of the eminent pickle-makers, Messrs. Crosse and Blackwell, but the beautiful stucco ceilings still remain to show what its other glories were. At one of her entertainments the pavilion was ceiled with looking-glasses, while the supper-room was laid out as a garden, the guests advancing in a walk between hedges, behind which were ranged the tables. The Soho fêtes continued in fashion for some twenty years or so. The directress at last

* There is a whole series of prints of Ranelagh and the Pantheon, finely engraved, and much esteemed by connoisseurs.

became bankrupt, and made ineffectual struggles to revive the public taste. But the Pantheon had been opened, and swept away all the fine company; and the unlucky directress was at last reduced to selling asses' milk at Hampstead. One of her last attempts was a sort of rural fête, for which she sought the Prince of Wales's patronage; but there is no evidence that it was accorded, and she died in the Fleet Prison in 1795. Such is too often the disastrous finale of those who are known as caterers for public amusements. One of her daughters, however, became a sort of reader to one of the princesses, changing her name.

Here is the description of an entertainment given at Lord Berwick's house in Portman Square, thrown open for the reception of masks. "The company were selected by tickets limited to the number of five hundred, and about eleven o'clock the rooms were completely filled with the fashionable world, in a great variety of excellent masquerade figures; the dominoes (contrary to the generality of masquerades) not being very prevalent. About half-past eleven his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales's party arrived from Carlton House, and consisted of a convent of gray friars, under the direction of a superior; they were thirteen in number, and most completely clad. The superior of these friars sung an extremely witty new character-song, with a chorus by the whole fraternity in a circle; which, at the request of the company, was sung a second time in the same manner. About one o'clock the whole body of monks unmasked, and were discovered to consist of the following group:

Superior of the Convent, Captain Morris, by whom the song
was written.

Monks.

His Royal Highness the
Prince of Wales.
Hon. H. Conway.
Hon. G. Conway.
Hon. C. Dillon.
Hon. S. Finch.
Lord Strathaven.

Hon. — St. John.
J. Payne, Esq.
P. O'Byrne, Esq.
M. Braddyll, Esq.
Col. Gardener.
Capt. Boyle."

The Prince gave another grand fête at Carlton House on the 10th of June. "The ball-room was fitted up in a light and pleasing style. Twelve superb lustres were suspended from the ceiling, and the same number of girandoles on brackets placed round the room. Two orchestras were constructed, hung with crimson silk. Upwards of two hundred ladies were present, some of whom were of the first accomplishments and fashion.

The ball was suspended at half-past one, and the company repaired to supper. Five rooms were laid out for the purpose. The Prince and a party, consisting of one hundred ladies and gentlemen, supped in the grand escaglio saloon. The Duchess of Devonshire was seated on the right hand of his royal highness, and Lady Beauchamp on the left. All the first families in the kingdom supped in this apartment. The company amounted together to four hundred and fifty. The supper consisted of eight removes of the choicest dishes, and a grand display of confectionery, with the most curious fruits.

"After supper the dances were resumed with great hilarity. The Prince danced with the Duchess of Gordon, Lady Duncannon, and several other ladies."

A ball at St. James's Palace a hundred years ago offers a contrast, in many respects, to such entertainments in our time, and, since those of lower degree offered nearly the same elements, the description of a royal birth-night ball may be accepted as a fair specimen of this mode of entertainment. The ball began before nine o'clock, when the King and Queen had taken their seats on chairs singly placed on the floor. Round them rose lines of seats in "pens," while nothing could be richer or more magnificent than the dresses; and, on great occasions, there was a sort of competition that made the display quite dazzling.

It was the *ton* even to have equipages mounted for the occasion; and the Court newsman would take care to describe "Lady ——'s chair, adorned in magnificent scarlet morocco with very rich silver ornaments, her 'running footmen' in silver lace;" or he would dwell on Mr. St. Leger—one of the Prince's companions—and his truly elegant equipage, "his carriage, servants, and horses being all as a young man of fashion should be." At present this part of the display is quite lost, and persons of condition have neither opportunity nor inclination, on arriving or departure, to criticise their neighbours' vehicles. "Gala-suits" were often worn by the princes and young nobles, the distinctive mark of which was embroidery along the seams; and, in 1782, a dress of the Prince, of this description, excited much admiration. It was of the colour called dauphin, a sort of blush tint, embroidered with pearls and "foil stones." The Marquis of Graham appeared in carmelite-coloured velvet, decorated with "stone clusters." The other dresses were nearly all of velvet with fur linings. On state occasions the King wore velvet embroidered with gold, and the Queen, a straw-coloured gown and petticoat trimmed with blonde and silver lace, drawn up in

festoons with strings of large pearls and clusters of diamonds. Tassels of diamonds also hung in front, relieved by azure blue ribbons. She wore, besides, flowers of diamonds. There were green gowns richly embroidered with silver, as in the case of Lady Spencer; or a puce-coloured bodice, as worn by Lady Salisbury; "the coat of crape-gauze ornamented in stripes with coloured foil flowers, between which were a number of the eyes of peacocks, fancifully disposed. The headdress fancied was in the style of an emperor's crown." The whole was, however, considered to have "an uncommonly novel and whimsical effect." The effect may be conceived of such a mass of rich materials and colours.

The King and Queen having given the signal, the dancing commenced. The minuets were the favourite measure. Persons who proposed to dance had previously sent for dancing-tickets to the Lord Chamberlain, and received numbers in regular order. These seated themselves on benches on the floor, at each side of his Majesty, and danced according to their rank. "God Save the King" was played, to the music of which the royal family walked round and greeted the company. The ball would be opened by the Prince of Wales with the person of highest rank present, who was usually the Princess Royal. This rule was carried out rigidly in all degrees of society, so that it often happened that a gentleman and his sister became partners. The Lord Chamberlain stands by with a list. The gentleman walks out to dance, putting on his hat and handing his sword to the Chamberlain to hold during the performance; at the conclusion of which the lady returns to her seat, while the gentleman remains and dances with the next lady. About twelve dances were generally thus given. Then the more lively country dance succeeded, to the favourite tunes of "Good Morrow to your Night-cap," "La Belle Catarina," or the "German Spa." The list of couples was sometimes after this fashion: The Prince of Wales standing up with the Princess Royal; the Duke of Cumberland with Lady A. Campbell; the Duke of Dorset with Lady Salisbury; Lord Rochford with Lady Stormont; Lord Graham with Lady Francis Smith; Mr. Greville with Lady Aylesford; Mr. North with Miss Bradwith; Colonel St. Leger with Miss Nottis; Mr. West with Lady Talbot; and Mr. Lumley with Miss Woodley.

This arrangement, it will be noticed, was highly select, and only allowed of but a few dancing out of a large crowd. Before twelve o'clock the ball broke up and the company departed.

On the 14th of May we find that the Prince was introduced

to a new source of enjoyment in the shape of the "Beefsteak Club," which represented the original type of club—which, of late, has become a sort of house of call—but was then the club proper. A general dinner, which occurred at short intervals, with a carouse to follow, was the club ideal of the day. The rules were suspended to admit him, as the number was complete. "The Finish," "The Owls," and a host of such convivial societies, which met at taverns, as did the more respectable. "The Club" of Johnson preceded "Watier's," "Crockford's," and other more refined establishments. "White's" and "Brookes's" answered to the "Carlton" and "Reform" Clubs of later times.

CHAPTER VII.

1784.

DURING this headlong race of pleasure, he had found time to surround himself with a class of friends not so respectable as the coterie with which he had set out, and these were of a peculiar, if not very respectable, kind. As we have been considering the forms of entertainment which the town affected, it may be interesting to see what was the type of "man about town" or "blood," which then obtained. These beings combined eccentricity and vice to a singular degree. Indeed, the best mode of giving an idea of the "fast life" of the day would be to present a sketch of some of the more conspicuous of the Prince's companions about this season. It should be remembered, however, that at this time the Prince's jovial friends belonged to a preceding era, and were now old-fashioned. They may be said, therefore, to have been his masters; but, by-and-by, he formed a school of his own. But from his own contemporaries no better specimens could be selected than the Barrys, Hangers, "Old Q——," Sir John Lade, and many more. The roystering nobleman or gentleman was fairly exemplified in the careers of the Barrymores, the Duke of Queensberry, the Duke of Norfolk, and Sir John Lade.

Lord Barrymore, eldest of the family of Barry, ran a short career, and bore the nickname of "Hellgate." His brother, the Honourable Henry Barry, was lame, or club-footed, and dubbed Cripplegate; while the Hon. and Rev. Augustus Barry, even less reputable than the other two, went by the name of "Newgate," for the rather illogical reason that he had been a tenant of every jail in the kingdom save that. There was a sister, of whom

little is known save that she became Lady Melfort, and that from her ready and copious use of oaths she received from the refined lips of the Prince the *sobriquet* of "Billingsgate." Lord Barrymore distinguished himself by bringing a thousand pounds for pocket-money to school. He came into a fortune of ten thousand a year, which in an incredibly short space of time he had contrived to charge with debts amounting to a couple of hundred thousand pounds, leaving but a couple of thousand a year to live upon. His extravagance took the most fantastic shapes. His hunting retinue was like the French king's, and he went out with four Africans, dressed magnificently, who played on the French horn during the chase. All the lowest scum of boxers and cockfighters were in his train. He delighted in cricketing, then in its infancy, and even held a commission in a militia regiment. He could turn verses and had a decided literary taste; and was so far musical, that on returning home from a new opera he could give an idea of the overture. "His lordship," says a pleasant actor who knew him well, "was alternate between the gentleman and the blackguard, the refined wit and the most vulgar bully was equally well known in St. Giles's and St. James's. - He could fence, dance, drive or drink, box or bet, with any man in the kingdom. He could discourse slang as trippingly as French, relish porter after port, and compliment her ladyship at a ball with as much ease and brilliance as he could bespatter in blood in a cider cellar." He was highly popular, the friend and companion of the Prince of Wales, who, later, treated him with the contemptuous freedom with which he favoured many of his boon companions. He would take some "spirited companions," and, going by night to a village or country town, shift all the various signs of the public-houses, transposing, say, The King's Head and The Red Lion, to the confusion of the owners and their customers. Often as he and his brothers were driving in a hackney-coach they would imitate the screams of a woman struggling—"Murder, murder! Let me go!" etc.—when the passers-by would be attracted, rush after them in pursuit, and stop the coach to rescue the sufferer. Then the fast lord and his friends would descend, fall on the interposers, who were quite bewildered to find there was no female in the coach, and administer a sound thrashing on the public highway. Or he would be driving with a guest and his brother "Newgate" in his chaise-and-four, returning to his country place, when, after some halt, the guest would find himself whirled along at a terrific pace, and discover that the postilions were in the rumble behind, and that the two brothers had taken their place. If he met an ill-conditioned waggoner on the road, who

would not give way, his lordship would descend to fight it out : if the winner, he would present the man with a guinea ; if the loser, he would shake hands good-humouredly.

At Brighton, he fitted a coffin to the back of his servant, taking the bottom off so as to leave room for the man's feet. This was carried with great solemnity to a gentleman's house in the Steyne, and left against the hall door. When the maid opened the door and saw this apparition, she shrieked and fainted away, and the family rushing down, a pistol was discharged which penetrated the coffin barely an inch above the servant's head. Did a particular kind of mild beer run short, three chaises were sent off in different directions, charged to look for beer, each returning after some hours with a cask inside.

But it was at his own house at Wargrave that he had full scope for his humour. This was a sort of cottage or villa, not far from Maidenhead, small and inconvenient ; but for which, from early associations, he had a liking. There he would collect the band of roysterers and "flappers" and butts, who furnished him with diversion, and here he was able to indulge his passion for the stage, having built a handsome theatre. He brought down an eminent Covent Garden mechanist, who exhausted his skill in scenes, traps, and other contrivances, so that such embarrassing works as pantomimes could be brought out successfully. Here a series of sterling comedies, such as "The Merry Wives of Windsor" and "Every Man in his Humour," was brought out, supported by amateurs of reputation like Captain Vathen and Mr. Wade, and professionals such as Palmer, Bannister, Johnstone, Incedon, Munden, and others. Captain Vathen and the host excelled in Archer and Scrub, and they were painted in character. Delpini, a well-known pantomimist, directed behind the scenes, and took the leading part in the pantomime ; he "favourite Pas Russe, as performed at the Italian Opera, being danced by Lord Barrymore and Mr. Delpini." Nothing could exceed the reckless extravagance with which this hobby was carried out. The professionals were asked *en masse*, and allowed to gratify every whim.

In the year 1788, the Prince of Wales was induced to come down and occupy a splendid mansion close by ; Lord Barrymore, whose house was too small, providing the rest of the entertainment. The performance did not begin till nine o'clock ; all the rank and fashion of the county were present. The prologue was written at a short notice by a son of Judge Blackstone, who abused his "fuddled" intellects for the purpose by tying a wet towel round his head.

There was generally in his train a set of bruisers, and one

noted individual known as "Hooper, the tinman," was permanently retained as a sort of body-guard. This man was the hero of one of his lordship's vagaries at Vauxhall, which at the time was much resented.

"Lord Barrymore," says one of his companions, "had, unknown to us, contrived to dress Tom Hooper, the tinman (one of the first pugilists at that time), as a clergyman, to be in waiting at Vauxhall, in case we should get into any dispute. His black clothes, formal hat, hair powdered and curled round so far disguised him, that he was unknown to us all at first, though Hooper's queer dialect must soon have discovered him to the waiters. This was a *ruse de guerre* of Lord Barrymore's. About three o'clock, whilst at supper, Lord Falkland, Henry Barry, Sir Francis Molineux, etc., were of our party; there was at this time a continual noise and rioting, and the arrack punch was beginning to operate. On a sudden all were seen running towards the orchestra, the whole garden seemed to be in confusion, and our party, all impatience, sallied out, those at the further end of the box walking over the table, kicking down the dishes. It seems that Hooper was now for fighting with everybody. A large ring was made, and, advancing in a boxing attitude, he threatened to fight anyone, but all retired before him."

The death of this noble roysterer was sudden, and of a very tragic kind. He was at Rye with his regiment—and, curious to say, he was considered a very painstaking and efficient officer—whence he and some French prisoners were to be sent to Deal under escort. He applied specially for the duty of commanding the party, no doubt hoping for some fun, or excitement. When they got outside Folkestone, the commander, always good-natured, halted at a convenient public-house, where he treated the whole party. Being tired of marching, he got into his carriage, which was following, wishing to smoke. He had his gun with him, which he had characteristically used as he marched along, to shoot any stray rabbits and gulls he might see on the road-side. Lighting his pipe, he handed his gun to his man, who held it awkwardly between his knees, when, as the good-natured master with his pipe was pointing out to him the coast of France, bidding him note how clear it was, the piece suddenly exploded, lodging the contents in his head. The right eye was blown out upon his cheeks, and some of the brain dropped upon the wheels. He lived but half an hour, groaning terribly all the while, and expired amid lamentations even of the French prisoners. A cynic might find an appropriateness in the scene of his last moments—that public-house where he had been so cheerful but a few

minutes before. He was no more than twenty-three. Such was the fate of "Hellgate," the eldest of the brethren.

He was succeeded by his brother, the Hon. Henry, known as the lame lord, or "Cripplegate." This gentleman, with the worthy parson, were said to be accountable for all the excesses of the elder brother, encouraging him in every conceivable way. The new lord had not the same bonhomie or the same love of fun. His excesses and oddities also became the public talk. He was considered very amusing, but, as Mr. Raikes says, from his want of principle as well as his want of good taste, was avoided by persons of his own station. This sort of character, too, finds itself more appreciated by persons of lower degree, whose society is therefore preferred.

Strange to say, this lord generally escaped chastisement, on account of the buffoonery that was mixed up with these insults. He had indeed a duel with a fat Mr. Howarth, at Brighton. A large crowd attended to see the sport, and was convulsed with laughter when he proceeded to strip himself to the waist, having the idea that portions of cloth, etc. were often driven in by the bullet. This comic spectacle took away the serious element, and after a random shot the affair terminated. He married a girl in Ireland of no family, but whose sister had made a conquest of an old French *émigré*—the Duke of Castries. He gradually sank to distress and difficulties, his house was assailed by bailiffs, whom, it is said, when he gave a dinner, he used to dress up in the family livery. He had finally to retire to France, where he died in great poverty, his brother-in-law, the Duke of Castries, now restored to his estates and honours, giving him shelter. He was, with all his follies, a man," says one who knew him, "of a generous nature. He had nothing mean in his nature, and preserved his independence of spirit amid great temptations to subserviency. One of his claims to fashionable reputation was his having invented the "Tiger," the smart juvenile servant who, in those days, was seated beside the owner of the cab, and not standing behind.

Of the Hon. and Rev. Augustus Barry, "I believe," says one of his friends cautiously, "neither the nobility nor the Church derived much advantage from his being a member of both classes. He had the curious faculty of exhibiting himself as a perfect gentleman or a perfect blackguard. It would be invidious to say which of the two characters he most commonly appeared." He, too, died in poverty and obscurity. Of "Billingsgate," the sister of the three brothers, little is known, save the faculty of uttering the words before described. And altogether a very remarkable family.

The well-known Duke of Queensberry was another of those *roués* of the old school. Facing the Green Park, and only a few doors from Park Lane, is still to be seen a remarkable porch, consisting of two tall pillars, without the usual steps, perched upon what looks like a small coach-house. This arrangement was made about seventy years ago to suit the infirmities of a disreputable old nobleman, who, seated in his chair, was let down by machinery from the high level of his parlour to the street. It was, in fact, "Old Q." himself, whom some London old gentlemen may still recollect.

"Old Q." was the last Duke of Queensberry, and, it may be added, the last of the frightful old *roués*, whose aim seemed to be to scandalise both heaven and earth by their excesses; the coterie that enjoyed "Hellfire Clubs" and Medmenham Abbeys, that "had to go to Paris" to get a waistcoat fit to put on, and who brought back a couple of dozen copies of Crébillon's newest romance for sale among friends. He was of the set that included Wilkes, Sandwich, Hall Stevenson, Gilly Williams, Hanger, Barrymore, and a host of others.

It is recorded that even when a schoolboy (he was born in 1725) he was "distinguished by his escapades in the capital;" such was the pleasant newspaper phrase. Lord March, the title "Old Q." then bore, soon became conspicuous in the town. He was a spirited, clever young man, with an extraordinary store of vivacity; and certainly it must be said that in writing a letter the *roués* of his time excelled. The letters of the fast young men of our day contrast unfavourably with the good English, straightforwardness, liveliness, and even wit, of the epistles of Lord March, Williams, Storer, and Lord Carlisle. One wager made him quite a reputation on account of the energy and anxiety he brought to bear on the result. He made a bet with an Irish gentleman that he would drive a carriage nineteen miles in an hour. Mr. Wright, "an ingenious coach-maker" of Long Acre, was employed to construct a vehicle of extraordinary lightness of wood and whalebone. The harness was formed of silk, instead of leather. The noble bettor practised for long before, four blood horses being driven at this terrific speed; and during the process no fewer than seven horses fell victims to the severity of the training. On the 29th of August, 1750, this curious match against time was run and won. The carriage was a sort of "spider" arrangement, consisting of little more than a pole and the wheels.

His lordship was conspicuous for the number and success of his attachments, or, as the newspaper of his day stated it, "was not insensible, if we are to credit report, to female charms."

The objects of his devotion were usually selected from the opera, and the "Zamperini" and the "Rena" contended for his patronage. As he grew old and older he grew more and more selfish, economised his pleasures warily, and became self-denying, so as to have more enjoyment, and not draw too extensively on his store of health and satisfaction; and thus succeeded in reaching a fine span of life. When near seventy, "Old Q." "ratted" on the first regency question, deserting his old master, as though he wished to secure the favour of the young prince. An old Lord Essex used to tell of his coming home betimes from a ball with the duke—both arrayed in their stars and decorations—and of some rustics bursting into a sort of horse-laugh at the sight. The duke said, simply, to his friend, at the same time tapping his stars, "What! have they found out this humbug at last?" He had magnificent seats in the country, which he never cared to visit, and a pretty villa at Richmond, to which the pious Mr. Wilberforce was once invited, and where he heard his host exclaim with an admirable candour: "I can't see what they admire in this river. There it goes, flow, flow, all day long." The predominant feature of his character was "to do what he liked, without caring who was pleased or displeased with it;" a simple and agreeable rule of life. As years passed on, and he grew more and more decayed, there was left to him the pastime of sitting in a cane chair, in his balcony, a parasol held over his head, in his bow-window at Piccadilly—"an emaciated libel on manhood," says one, who had seen him ogling the ladies of all degrees who passed by—and a groom ready mounted, Jack Radford by name, waiting below to ride after such friend or acquaintance as the duke recognised. In the afternoon, he was to be seen tottering down the little iron staircase to his vis-à-vis—a dark green vehicle, with long-tailed black horses. During winter he carried a muff, two servants sat in the rumble, while the indispensable Jack Radford rode behind. A buck of fifty years ago recalled him as "a little sharp-looking man, very irritable, who swore like ten thousand troopers." There was indeed a suggestion of Voltaire's face. Still, we are told that, "viewed from behind," he appeared surprisingly youthful; a rather ambiguous compliment. A physician enjoyed an annuity of five hundred a year for the duke's life, with the understanding that nothing was to be expected after death. But he did not rest on the arts of legitimate pharmacy. A French quack, named Père Elisée, was in his grace's service, whose duty it was to compound strange drugs, supposed to have an elixir-like virtue, and to supply the vital power that was departing. At one time a rumour was rife in London that the aged duke was in

the habit of taking milk baths ! Thus the old man struggled on, now becoming deaf of one ear, now blind of an eye, now supplying its place with a glass one ; a perfect ruin, but still preserving what were called his "elegant manners." At last, when eighty-five years old, and in the year 1810, this selfish and uninteresting specimen of an old epicurean was to be called away from his three superb "places," his hoarded wealth, and his pleasures.

His testament was found to be a curious document, consisting of a will formally executed, and no fewer than twenty-five codicils, more irregularly drawn. His ready money was found to amount to nearly a million sterling, and the disposition of it caused a universal flutter. Lord Yarmouth (later one of the Regent's choicest and most favoured companions), with his wife, inherited all the vast estates ; a disposition revoked in the codicils, and reduced to two hundred and fifty thousand pounds in cash. This jovial boon companion was familiarly styled by his friends, from the peculiar tint of his whiskers, "Red Herrings ;" while his wife was the well-known heroine of George Selwyn's insane devotion.

A vast number of his friends were left either ten thousand or five hundred a year. Three French ladies received a thousand pounds apiece, with which they were, no doubt, but ill-contented. Some of the other legacies were marked by a strange oddity : a Mrs. Brown was allotted an annuity of only five guineas a year ; while Jack Radford, his well-known groom, received an annuity of two hundred pounds, together with all his horses and carriages. His steward, confectioner, and other important attendants had each the same ; the female servants were nearly all passed over. The French compounder of mysterious drugs had five thousand pounds. The legacy duty on the whole was calculated at about one hundred and twenty thousand pounds. But the old epicurean passed over the apothecary who attended him until he was himself brought to the verge of the grave. He had attended him for seven weary years, had paid nine thousand three hundred and forty visits, besides sitting up some seventeen hundred nights ! He claimed ten thousand pounds. The heirs were just enough to admit his claim, and at the trial came forward to support him ; and though the judge declared that an apothecary had no right to recover fees, the jury found for him to the amount of nearly eight thousand pounds. Unfortunately, all these splendid legacies belonged to the twenty-five codicils, written on sheets of note-paper and improperly prepared. This was to the advantage of the Yarmouths, who, indeed, would lose a legacy in specie, but in its place receive a vast estate. The only resource was Chancery, and for six years the Jack Radfords and other

humble annuitants were tortured by suspense, until, at last, the Yarmouths consented, on some certain shape of indemnity, that the legacies should be paid.

He was interred, rather inappropriately, under the communion-table of St. James's Church. He was attended to the grave by his male servants only; the unremembered female servants, probably, not caring to attend. The heiress, who had been George Selwyn's pet and had sat on his knee, now more than a hundred years ago, lived until the year 1856, dying when nearly ninety years old.

The Duke of Norfolk, then Lord Surrey, and the friend of Fox, was another of this odious school of rakes. He was not devoid of political talent, and took a leading and spirited part in the contests that preceded and followed Fox's India Bill. Gross in his tastes, addicted to low pleasures, heartless—a characteristic of convivial intercourse—in his old age he became a sort of bloated voluptuary, delighting in the company low places offered. It is difficult indeed to realise the state of society, when noblemen of the highest rank were found sitting night after night at taverns about Covent Garden, meeting their frequenters on terms of equality. He was described as "a vulgar, heavy, dirty mass of matter, that could swill wine like a Silenus and gorge beefsteaks like a buckhorse." "In his youth," says one who knew him (Sir N. Wraxall), "he led a most licentious life, having frequently passed the whole night in excesses of every kind, and even lain down when intoxicated, occasionally, to sleep in the streets or on a block of wood. At the Beefsteak Club, where I have dined with him, he seemed to be in his proper element. But few individuals of that society could sustain a contest with such an antagonist when the cloth was removed. In cleanliness he was negligent to so great a degree that he rarely made use of water for purposes of bodily refreshment and comfort. He even carried the neglect of his person so far, that his servants were accustomed to avail themselves of his fits of intoxication for the purpose of washing him. On those occasions, being wholly insensible of all that passed about him, they stripped him as they would have done a corpse, and performed on his body the necessary ablutions. Nor did he change his linen more frequently than he washed himself. Complaining one day to Dudley North that he was a martyr to the rheumatism, and had ineffectually tried every remedy for its relief, 'Pray, my lord,' said he, 'did you ever try a clean shirt?'

"Drunkenness was in him an hereditary vice, transmitted down, probably, by his ancestors from the Plantagenet times, and inherent in his formation. His father indulged equally in it,

but he did not manifest the same capacities as his son in resisting the effects of wine. It is a fact, that after laying his father and all the guests under the table at the Thatched House Tavern in St. James's Street, he has repaired to another festive party in the vicinity, and there recommenced the unfinished convivial rites." At these taverns and houses of call were met an abundance of low revellers, such as Felix Macarthy, who did political service for his friends, Billy Hewardine and Jemmy Bibb, the original of "Jeremy Diddler"—types now likely to be found at the music halls.*

His companion and *protégé*, Captain Morris, who used to delight him and the Beefsteak Club with his convivial and amatory songs, sank into old age, and would have died in want and destitution unless the pressure of friends had shamed the duke into making him a small allowance.

Sir John Lade was, we are told, the Prince's tutor in the art of driving, and, on his coming of age in 1780, was honoured by Johnson with some prophetic verses. The sage repeated them on his death-bed. They are indeed admirable :

Long-expected one-and-twenty,
Ling'ring year, at length is flown ;
Pride and pleasure, pomp and plenty,
Great Sir John are now your own.

Loosen'd from the minor's tether,
Free to mortgage or to sell,
Wild as wind and light as feather,
Bid the sons of thrift farewell.

Call the Betseys, Kates, and Jennies,
All the names that banish care ;
Lavish of your grandsire's guineas,
Show the spirit of an heir.

All that prey on vice and folly
Joy to see their quarry fly ;
There the gamester, light and jolly,
There the lender grave and sly.

* For an account of these worthies and others of their class, the reader may consult Bernard's "Retrospections," Adolphus's "Memoirs," and that curious miscellany, "Records of My Life," by John Taylor, editor of *The Sun*. Another strange and mixed picture of manners at the commencement of the century is given in Richardson's "Recollections."

Wealth, my lad, was made to wander,
 Let it wander as it will ;
 Call the jockey, call the pander,
 Bid them come and take their fill.

When the bonny blade carouses,
 Pockets full, and spirits high—
 What are acres ? what are houses ?
 Only dirt, or wet or dry.

Should the guardian friend or mother
 Tell the woes of wilful waste :
 Scorn their counsels, scorn their pother,
 You can hang or drown at last.

He married a lady said to have been drawn from St. Giles's, under the favouring patronage of Rann, or Sixteen-string Jack, a notorious criminal, at whose execution at Tyburn she secured the notice of persons of high degree. At the Windsor hunt, her skill in riding attracted the Prince's notice. She excelled her husband in the art of driving, and her curricie and four excited the admiration of all.*

These persons—and there were many more like these—will give a sufficient idea of what “the bloods” of the day were like. They were to be succeeded by the Yarmouths, Brummells, Jack Paynes, and many more. The wonder is that the young prince did not become a thorough-paced reprobate.

Another of these friends was the Hon. George Hanger, afterwards Lord Coleraine, who was a noble author. This eccentric being entered the Guards, which he left to join the Hessians abroad, and after some service in America, returned to town, where he made the acquaintance of the Prince of Wales, then in all the riotous flush of his early career. Mr. Hanger became his boon companion, and for sixteen years “enjoyed his protection, having viewed him in every stage—health, on a sick bed, etc.” It was in this connection that he acquired celebrity by his geese-and-turkey wager with the Prince. This singular transaction is thus described :

* Her skill was celebrated in the well-known lines :

More than one steed Letitia's empire feels,
 Who sits triumphant o'er the flying wheels;
 And as she guides them through th' admiring throng,
 With what an air she smacks the silken thong!
 Graceful as John, she moderates the reins,
 And whistles sweet her diuretic strains.

“During one of the convivial parties at Carlton House, Mr. Hanger designedly introduced the subject of the travelling powers of the turkey and the goose, and declared that the turkey would outstrip the goose. The Prince, who placed great reliance on his judgment in subjects of this nature, backed his opinion. A match was made with Mr. Berkeley of twenty turkeys against twenty geese, for a distance of ten miles; the race to be for five hundred pounds. And as Mr. Hanger and the turkey party hesitated not to lay two to one in favour of their bird, the Prince did the same to a considerable amount, not in the least suspecting that the whole was a deep-laid plan to extract a sum of money from his pockets. The Prince deputed Mr. Hanger to select twenty of the most wholesome and high-feathered birds which could be procured; and, on the day appointed, he and his party of turkeys, and Mr. Berkeley and his party of geese, set off to decide the match. For the first three hours, everything seemed to indicate that the turkeys would be the winners, as they were then two miles in advance of the geese; but, as night came on, the turkeys began to stretch out their necks towards the branches of the trees which lined the sides of the road. In vain the Prince attempted to urge them on with his pole, to which a bit of red cloth was attached; in vain Mr. Hanger dislodged one from its roosting-place, only to see three or four others comfortably perching amongst the branches; in vain was the barley strewn upon the road. In the meantime, the geese came waddling on, and in a short time passed the turkeys, whose party were all busy among the trees attempting to dislodge the birds; but further progress was found impossible, and the geese were declared the winners.”

This nobleman, a few years afterwards becoming more eccentric, declined to sign himself by his title, and made it a matter of offence to be addressed by it. He later wrote some strange confessions, and indeed must be pronounced to have been altogether mad.

Such was the curious assemblage of friends that attended the young prince on his entering life, and in such hopeful company the only surprise is that he was not more hopelessly corrupted than he proved to be.

Yet it would be as unreasonable to judge of his taste from this type of associate, as it was in Mr. Thackeray to write him down a tailor's block and nothing more. Men of low tastes, as they are called, may show lack of refinement, but not of intellectual power, and the Prince would as often be found presiding over a gathering of men like Fox, Sheridan, Erskine,

Francis, and others. Among his friends, too, was the wonderful and brilliant Hugh Elliott, a name little known now, yet during his career enjoying a European reputation. The story of his marriage with Mdle. De Krauth and his duel with Kniphausen were the talk of diplomatists ; but more remarkable was his bold interference in Sweden in 1788—his unauthorised assurances to the king of English support at a most critical juncture. Nothing indeed is more remarkable than the mixed character of the Prince's circle.

CHAPTER VIII.

1785.

ONE result of such monitors and their wild courses may be conceived. He was found to be prematurely steeped in debt, and, before he was five-and-twenty, was as fairly crippled and "ruined" as the most abandoned spendthrift. It was curious to find to what a sum his debts had reached in so short a time; and the result of the first attempts of those periodical "liquidations," which were to recur so frequently, now comes before us.

"This morning," his Majesty wrote to Mr. Pitt on March 24th, "I received the enclosed note from Lord Southampton, on which I appointed him to be at St. James's, when I returned from the House of Peers. He then delivered to me the letter from the Prince of Wales. All I could collect from him was, that there are many sums, but it cannot be honourable to explain; that Lord Southampton has reason to believe they have not been incurred for political purposes; that he thinks the going abroad is now finally resolved on; and that perhaps the champion of the Opposition has been consulted on the letter now sent. I therefore once more send all that has passed to Mr. Pitt, and hope to hear in the course of to-morrow from him what answer ought to be sent to this extraordinary epistle, which, though respectful in terms, is in direct defiance of my whole correspondence. I suppose Mr. Pitt will choose to consult the Chancellor."*

The phrases, "incurred for political purposes," "the champion of the Opposition," showed what was in the King's mind. It has been said indeed that "it would almost seem that, instead of his having turned a deaf ear to his son's solicitations, he was ready

* Earl Stanhope, "Life of Pitt," i. 30, Appendix.

to place the settlement of the business in the hands of Pitt and the Chancellor." But the later proceedings show that the minister was equally disinclined to consent to arrangement. Taking this letter, with Sir J. Harris's account of his interviews, the inference is that the Prince was right in his view that the other side was not really anxious to come to his assistance, save on the terms of a complete political surrender and submission, and of breaking with the Opposition; and that the objections made as to not disclosing the nature of the debts were a convenient pretext for refusal. The Prince had given up his idea of going abroad, and was willing to retrench, to set aside a portion of his income for payment of his debts; so that his outburst to Sir J. Harris—"I cannot abandon Charles and my friends"—showed the sacrifice that was required of him. But he himself shall now tell what his desperate condition was and what his grievances. In a curious conversation with his friend Harris, in April, 1785, he unfolded the steps that had been taken to set him free.

"The Prince began by saying that as he was convinced of my sincere regard for him, he wished to make me acquainted with his situation; to communicate it to me fully, and to consult me upon it. The original ideas of the then ministry were, to give him £50,000 to pay his debts, £50,000 to fit him out, and £100,000 a year, exclusive of the Duchy of Cornwall. The King, after having apparently approved of this arrangement, refused ultimately to agree to it. The ministers were on the point of going out (Lord Carlisle, Mr. Fox, and Lord Keppel), but the Prince of Wales being told that Lord John Cavendish was against it, and that the King had referred to Lords North and Stormont (as his old friends) to decide on the propriety of his conduct, he (the Prince of Wales—this affair was negotiated between the Prince and Charles Fox by Colonel Leake) insisted that they should stay in, and that he would not be the cause of a revolution in ministry, or have it said he ran counter to the King's pleasure in his first outset. In consequence of this he received £30,000 to pay his debts, and £30,000 to equip him, with £50,000 a year out of the Civil List. He found his house unfurnished; that, and many other expenses—some necessary to his rank, some, as he confessed, incurred by the natural imprudences of a young man—soon involved him in debts to a very considerable amount.

"In the autumn of 1784* he wrote to the King, stating his embarrassed situation, and signifying his wish to travel in order to retrench. The idea of his travelling was reprobated, and, after several letters had passed, the King desired the Prince of Wales to send in an exact statement of his debts, giving him to

* "Diaries of Lord Malmesbury," vii. 121.

understand he would liquidate them. This the Prince did *en gros*. It was kept four months, and then returned on the King's saying it was not exact. The articles were not specified. The Prince sent it back again with every article minuted by his treasurer, except one of £25,000, which was lumped, and which he could not account for. (He told me it was borrowed money, and that he was obliged, in honour, not to tell from whom he got it.) The King objected to this reserve, insisted on its being explained. The Prince persisted in his refusal, alleging the motive of secrecy to be one of honour. The King replied that if it was a debt he was ashamed to explain, it was one he ought not to pay. Here the matter ended. The Prince's debts increased, and with them his embarrassment and distress. He now owes £160,000. He ended his discourse by telling me that, circumstanced as he was, he saw no means of relief left but by going abroad, that he only wanted to ask me whether he should distress me or not if he was to come to the Hague in a private character, and whether I could present him as such. He added, he would rather not come at all (though it was his resolution to travel) than distress me, or oblige me to act improperly."

Sir James Harris remonstrated against this step, urging that "you may rest assured in that case I shall receive orders how to act towards you before your arrival; and those orders, let them be ever so much in contradiction to my feelings, I must obey.

"P.—Certainly. I should be the last person to wish you to do otherwise. But what am I to do? Am I to be refused the right of every individual? Cannot I travel legally, as a private man, without the King's consent?

"H.—I think it very immaterial for your Royal Highness to know whether you can, or cannot, legally travel without his Majesty's consent; since it is evident that you cannot with any propriety to the public, or satisfaction to yourself, cross the seas without it.

"P.—Why not? I wish to travel on a plan of economy; to be unknown; to live in retirement.

"H.—Without entering into the almost impossibility of your Royal Highness making so rapid a transition in your ways of life, I confess I see no event would give me so much pain, as an Englishman, as to see a Prince of Wales abroad under such a description.

"P.—I feel what you say; but what can I do? The King proposed to me to lay by £10,000 a year to pay my debts, at a time when, with the strictest economy, my expenses are twice my income. I am ruined if I stay in England. I disgrace myself as a man.

"H.—Your Royal Highness, give me leave to say, will find no relief in travelling the way you propose. You will be either slighted, or, what is worse, become the object of political intrigue at every Court you pass through.

"P.—But if I avoid all great Courts? If I keep to the smaller ones of Germany, can this happen? I may there live unnoticed and unknown.

"H.—Impossible, sir. The title of the Earl of Chester will be only a mask which covers the Prince of Wales, and, as such, your actions will ever be judged.

"P.—You think I mean to go to France. I shall keep to the Empire, and perhaps to Italy.

"H.—What I say applies to all countries, sir. As for France, I hope never to see a Prince of Wales there on any other purpose than that which carried the Black Prince; or ever to hear of his being at Calais, but to fix the British standard on its walls.

"P.—But what can I do, my dear Harris? The King hates me. He wants to set me at variance with my brother. I have no hopes from him. He won't let even Parliament assist me till I marry.

"H.—But there exists so cordial an affection between your Royal Highness and the Duke of York, that I should think he might be employed most usefully to reconcile the King to your Royal Highness. It cannot be a difficult task when undertaken by a brother.

"P.—If he thought it possible, he would come over immediately. He has often expressed his concern at our disunion, and declares he never will leave the Continent till he can see a prospect of bringing the King to enter into my situation.

"H.—Surely, sir, the King could not object to any increase of income Parliament thought proper to allow your Royal Highness?

"P.—I believe he would. He hates me; he always did, from seven years old.

"H.—His Majesty may be displeased and dissatisfied with your Royal Highness, but surely he cannot hate you?

"P.—It may be so, but it cannot be. We are too wide asunder ever to meet. The King has deceived me, he has made me deceive others; I cannot trust him, and he will never believe me.

"H.—I am sorry your Royal Highness thinks so. The confidence and kindness with which you hear me perhaps makes me speak more freely than I ought, but I think your Royal Highness should try every possible means before you carry into execution your plan of travelling.

"P.—I will think it over, but I see no option. We will meet again soon. I have great reliance on your opinion, and am disposed to attend to you, because I am convinced you have no interested motives in advising me.

"On Saturday, May the 21st, the Prince took an opportunity of saying many obliging things to me at an assembly at Mrs. Sturt's, in St. James's Square. I was induced, in consequence of this civility, to ask permission to reclaim his promise of allowing me to wait upon him again at Carlton House. He appointed the Monday following at 2 P.M. My motive for requesting this interview was, that I had received vague assurances from Lord Carmarthen (Secretary of State for the Foreign Department, and and who spoke after Mr. Pitt, First Lord of the Treasury) that the ministry would not be adverse to increase his Royal Highness's income, providing he would consent to appropriate a share of it to liquidate his debts, renounce going abroad, and be reconciled to the King.

"Before I opened this subject to him I consulted both the Duke of Portland and Mr. Fox; and both of them expressed their approbation of the measure, and their wishes for me to mention it to the Prince.

"After waiting some time after the hour appointed on Monday, he sent for me up into his dressing-room. Our conversation was nearly what follows:

"P.—If you are come, my dear Harris, to dissuade me again from travelling, let me anticipate your kind intentions by telling you I have dismissed that idea from my mind. I see all my other friends, as well as yourself, are against it, and I subscribe to their opinion.

"H.—After what you have told me, sir, allow me to express my infinite satisfaction on hearing you have given up your plan.

"P.—I am glad to have pleased you, at least, if I have not pleased myself. Yet I am sure you will be concerned to see the distressed and unbecoming light in which I must appear by remaining in England.

"H.—This had better appear here (admitting it to be the case) than to strangers. But, sir, the purport of my troubling your Royal Highness was to obviate this unpleasant circumstance.

"P.—How so?

"H.—I have thought, sir, with great anxiety on all you said to me when I was last admitted to your presence, and, if you will allow me, I will lay before you the result of my reflections.

"P.—Most willingly.

"H.—If your Royal Highness will give me leave, I will propose to Mr. Pitt to increase your revenue to £100,000 a year on two conditions. The one, that you will set aside £50,000 of it to pay your debts; the other, that you will cease to be a man of party, and reconcile yourself to the King.

"P.—Your good-will towards me deceives you. The attempt would be useless. Pitt would not carry such a proposal to Parliament: the King would not hear of it.

"H.—This, sir, is exactly what I mean to try. You certainly shall not be committed; and the refusal shall be given to me alone.

"P.—I thank you; but it will not do. I tell you the King hates me. He would turn out Pitt for entertaining such an idea; besides, I cannot abandon Charles and my friends.

"H.—Mr. Fox and the Duke of Portland have told me often, sir, that they by no means wish your Royal Highness to condescend, on their account, to take any share in party concerns. They have repeatedly declared that a Prince of Wales ought to be of no party.

"P.—Well, but admitting this, and supposing that I can get rid of a partiality in politics you seem to condemn, I tell you, Harris, the King will never listen to it. Pitt dares not mention it to him; or, if he did, is he strong enough in the House of Lords to carry it through?

"H.—But, sir, I presuppose a reconciliation between you and his Majesty. Surely this would be grateful to the King himself, and most particularly so to the Queen.

"P.—Why, my dear Harris, will you force me to repeat to you that the King hates me? He will never be reconciled to me.

"H.—It cannot be, sir. If you order me, I will ask an audience of him, and fling myself at his feet.

"P.—I love you too well to encourage you to undertake so useless a commission. If you will not credit me, you will, perhaps, credit the King himself. Take and read all our correspondence for these last six months.

"The Prince here opened an escritoire, and took out a large bundle of papers, which he read to me. It consisted of various letters which had passed between him and the King, beginning with that in which he asked his leave to go abroad in autumn, 1784, as mentioned in my first conversation.

"It is needless to attempt to relate precisely the contents of this correspondence; it is sufficient to observe that the Prince's letters were full of respect and deference, written with great plainness of style and simplicity. Those of the King were also

well written, but harsh and severe; constantly refusing every request the Prince made, and reprobating in each of them his extravagance and dissipated manner of living. They were void of every expression of parental kindness or affection; and, after both hearing them read, and perusing them myself, I was compelled to subscribe to the Prince's opinion, and to confess there was very little appearance of making any impression on his Majesty in favour of his Royal Highness. I resumed, however, the conversation as follows:

"H.—I am hurt to a degree, sir, at what I have read. But still, sir, the Queen must have a reconciliation so much at heart, that through her and your sisters it surely might be effected.

"P.—Look ye, Harris; I cannot bring myself to say I am in the wrong when I am in the right. The King has used me ill; and I wish the public knew what you now know, and was to pronounce between us.

"H.—I should be very sorry, indeed, sir, if this was known beyond these walls; for I am much mistaken if the public would not pronounce a judgment widely different from that you think. It is not sufficient, sir, for the King to be wrong in one point: sir, unless you are in the right in all, and as long as any part of your conduct is open to censure, the voice of the public (considering your relative situations) will always go with the King.

"P.—That is a cruel truth, if it be true what you say; but it is of no use to investigate it; my case never will go to that tribunal. You are, however, convinced of the impracticability of your scheme, as much, I hope, as I am of your kind regard in proposing it to me.

"H.—I would not willingly renounce an idea, which, by its accomplishment, is to relieve your Royal Highness from a state of distress, and, I may say, discredit, and place you in one of affluence and comfort. May I suggest, sir, the idea of your marrying? It would, I should think, be most agreeable to the King, and, I am certain, most grateful to the nation.

"P. (with vehemence).—I never will marry! My resolution is taken on that subject. I have settled it with Frederick. No, I never will marry!

"H.—Give me leave to say, sir, most respectfully, that you cannot have really come to such a resolution; and you must marry, sir: you owe it to the country, to the King, to yourself.

"P.—I owe nothing to the King. Frederick will marry, and the crown will descend to his children; and as for myself, I do not see how it affects me.

"H.—Till you are married, sir, and have children, you have

no solid hold on the affections of the people, even while you are Prince of Wales ; but if you come to the throne a bachelor, and his Royal Highness the Duke of York is married and has sons to succeed you, your situation, when King, will be more painful than it is at this moment. Our own history furnishes strong examples of the truth of what I say.

“The Prince was greatly struck with this observation. He walked about the room, apparently angry. I moved towards the door, saying: I perceive, sir, I have said too much: you will allow me to withdraw. I am sure I shall be forgiven an hour hence.

“P.—You are forgiven now, my dear Harris. I am angry with myself, not with you. Don’t question me any more. I will think of what you have said. Adieu. God bless you!”

Such was this singular dialogue, which shows that not only the King and his minister, but the Prince’s own friends, were eager that he should withdraw from political agitation, and cease from presenting to the nation the scandalous spectacle of a son at war with his father. The most remarkable passage in this conversation was his vehement declaration that he would never marry: most significant when we shall learn the strange romantic adventure that he was then engaged in, which, by an awkward coincidence, was contemporaneous with a general earnest desire that he should contract a marriage. This he was presently to do ; but after a fashion that was to bring discredit on himself and cruel wrong to a highly-principled and virtuous woman.

CHAPTER IX.

1785.

A BEAUTIFUL woman, attractive and gifted in many ways, had excited a violent passion in the Prince. This was the well-known Mrs. Fitzherbert, then living on Richmond Hill.* She was then twenty-eight years old, the youngest daughter of Mr. Smythe, a country squire, in Hampshire. She had been first married, in 1775, to Mr. Edward Weld, uncle to the cardinal of that name, a family held in high esteem by the King, who paid many visits to his castle at Lulworth. Mr. Weld died in the very year of their marriage, and she espoused later Mr. Fitzherbert, of Swinnerton, in Staffordshire, who died in May, 1781, leaving her—then a most attractive person—with a fortune of two thousand pounds a year. Looking at her portrait by Conway, we can see of what kind were the blooming charms that so fascinated “an august personage:” the exquisitely-cut lips, the round features (full yet not plump), the store of refined good humour and good nature without vulgarity. All contemporaneous accounts agree as to her amiability and strict principle. It was at Richmond Hill, as she told Lord Stourton, that she in the first instance became acquainted with the Prince, and “the object of his most ardent attentions,”

* An attempt has been made to associate her name with the well-known ballad, “The Lass of Richmond Hill;” but there can be little doubt the song has no connection with Mrs. Fitzherbert. She could scarcely be termed a “lass” at the time, having been twice a widow; and the allusion in “I’d crowns resign to call thee mine” is merely a conventional phrase in amatory chanting. A Miss Cropp and a Miss Janson, of Richmond, in Yorkshire, are the other claimants. It was sung at Vauxhall in 1789.

and thus the well-known song was said by a number of writers, usually well informed, to have been composed in her honour.

The late Lord Stourton, to whom she confided her story, and Mr. Charles Langdale, who prepared a moderate and interesting account from the materials, explains the difficulties and embarrassments to which she was exposed from the extravagance of her admirer's passion. The lady was a woman of the first fashion, and not what is called a devotee.

"For some time," says Lord Stourton, relating her story, "her resistance had been availing; but she was about to meet with a species of attack so unprecedented and alarming, as to shake her resolution, and to force her to take that first step which afterwards led by slow (but on the part of the Prince successful) advances to that union which he so ardently desired, and to obtain which he was ready to risk such personal sacrifices. Keit (the surgeon) Lord Onslow, Lord Southampton, and Mr. Edward Bouverie arrived at her house in the utmost consternation, informing her that the life of the Prince was in imminent danger, that he had stabbed himself, and that only her immediate presence would save him. She resisted, in the most peremptory manner, all their importunities, saying that nothing should induce her to enter Carlton House. She was afterwards brought to share in the alarm; but still fearful of some stratagem derogatory to her reputation, insisted upon some lady of high character accompanying her, as an indispensable condition: the Duchess of Devonshire was selected. They four drove from Park Street to Devonshire House, and took her along with them. She found the Prince pale and covered with blood. The sight so overpowered her faculties, that she was deprived almost of all consciousness. The Prince told her that nothing would induce him to live unless she promised to become his wife, and permitted him to put a ring round her finger. I believe a ring from the hand of the Duchess of Devonshire was used upon the occasion, and not one of his own. Mrs. Fitzherbert being asked by me," adds Lord Stourton, "whether she did not believe that some trick had been practised, and that it was not really the blood of his Royal Highness, answered in the negative; and said she had frequently seen the scar, and that some brandy-and-water was near his bedside when she was called to him on the day he wounded himself. They returned to Devonshire House. A deposition was drawn up of what had occurred, and signed and sealed by each one of the party; and, for all she knew to the contrary, might still be there. On the next day she sent a letter to Lord Southampton, protesting against what had taken place, as not being then a free agent."

It might be supposed that this strange scene was an artifice to impose on an excitable woman. Jesse says "it was probably a trick." There can be little doubt that the whole performance, to a certain degree, was genuine; for through his life we find traces of this extravagant sensibility, which became yet more exaggerated from habits of drinking, with even traces of that excitement under which his father laboured. He was given to tears and violent emotion. Mr. Moore set the story down in his diary with the addition: "that the Prince had fired at the head of the bed, and had then tried the other weapon." In his agitation he had no doubt some confused idea of doing himself injury with a view to make himself interesting in the eyes of her he loved.

As soon, however, as she reflected on the consequence of what had taken place, she saw its inconveniences. On the next day she left England and withdrew to Holland, while the baffled Prince retired to the country. From that moment she was persecuted, and his couriers passed and repassed with letters imploring her to return. He displayed the utmost infatuation and despair. He used to repair—Mrs. Fox assured her friends—for comfort to her house, and behaved in the most extravagant style. Lord Holland says that "Mrs. Fox, then Mrs. Armistead, had repeatedly assured him, that the Prince came down more than once to converse with her and Mr. Fox on the subject; that he cried by the hour; he testified the sincerity and violence of his passion and despair by extravagant expressions and actions—rolling on the floor, striking his forehead, tearing his hair, falling into hysterics, and swearing that he would abandon the country, forego the crown, etc."

Wearied out with his importunities, she at last agreed to return under a solemn engagement on his part of a formal marriage, such as would satisfy her conscience. This may have been an indiscreet proceeding; but it was hard to expect that she was to expatriate herself for the most precious years of her life. Lord Stourton was shown a letter of the Prince's, thirty-seven pages long, in which was the statement that "the King would connive at the union." This it would be going too far to call a falsehood, and may have been meant as inference merely.

It was in the first week of December that she arrived. And the sagacious Fox, who had not seen his patron for some weeks, began to suspect what was on foot. The Prince had no doubt avoided the society of his friend, from an awkward consciousness of his secret and of the step he now intended. But when the arrival of the lady became known, the Prince must have been disagreeably surprised to receive a remonstrance and warn-

ing from his friend Mr. Fox, enjoining him to take care, and pointing out the serious dangers of such a step.

After declaring that he knew he was running the risk of displeasing him, Mr. Fox thus appeals to him:

“I was told just before I left town yesterday that Mrs. Fitzherbert was arrived, and if I had heard only this I should have felt most unfeigned joy at an event which I knew would contribute so much to your Royal Highness’s satisfaction; but I was told at the same time that from a variety of circumstances, which had been observed and put together, there was reason to suppose that you were going to take the very desperate step (pardon the expression) of marrying her at this moment. If such an idea be really in your mind, and it is not too late, for God’s sake let me call your attention to some considerations, which my attachment to your Royal Highness, and the real concern that I take in whatever relates to your interest, have suggested to me, and which may possibly have the more weight with you when you perceive that Mrs. Fitzherbert is equally interested in most of them with yourself. In the first place, you are aware that a marriage with a Catholic throws the prince contracting such marriage out of the succession of the crown. If there be a doubt about her previous conversion, consider the circumstances in which *you* stand: the King not feeling for you as a father ought; the Duke of York professedly his favourite, and likely to be married to the King’s wishes; the nation full of its old prejudices against Catholics, and justly dreading all disputes about succession. In all these circumstances your enemies might take such advantages of any doubt of this nature as I shudder to think of, and though your generosity might think no sacrifice too great to be made to a person whom you love so entirely, consider what her reflections must be in such an event, and how impossible it would be for her ever to forgive herself. I have stated this danger upon the supposition that the marriage could be a real one, but your Royal Highness knows as well as I that according to the present laws of the country it cannot, and I need not point out to your good sense what a source of uneasiness it must be to you, to her, and above all to the nation, to have it a matter of dispute and discussion whether the Prince of Wales is or is not married. If there should be children from the marriage, I need not say how much the uneasiness as well of yourselves as of the nation must be aggravated. If anything could add to the weight of these considerations, it is the impossibility of remedying the mischiefs I have alluded to. For, if your Royal Highness should think proper, when you are twenty-five years old, to notify to Parliament your intention to marry (by which means alone a *legal* marriage can be contracted), in what

manner can it be notified? If the previous marriage is mentioned or owned, will it not be said that you have set at defiance the laws of your country, and that you now come to Parliament for a sanction to what you have already done in contempt of it? If there are children, will it not be said that we must look for future applications to legitimate them, and consequently be liable to disputes for the succession between the eldest son—and the eldest son after the legal marriage? And will not the entire annulling of the whole marriage be suggested as the most secure way of preventing all such disputes? It will be said that a woman who has lived with you as your wife without being so is not fit to be Queen of England; and thus the very thing that is done for the sake of her reputation will be used against it; and what would make this worse would be that the marriage being known (though not officially communicated to Parliament), it would be impossible to deny the assertion. In the meantime a mock marriage (for it can be no other) is neither honourable for any of the parties, nor, with respect to your Royal Highness, even safe. This appears so clear to me that, if I were Mrs. Fitzherbert's father or brother, I would advise her not by any means to agree to it, *and to prefer any other species of connection with you to one leading to so much misery and mischief.*

"It is high time I should finish this very long and, perhaps your Highness will think, ill-timed letter; but, such as it is, it is dictated by pure zeal and attachment to your Royal Highness. With respect to Mrs. Fitzherbert, she is a person with whom I have scarcely the honour of being acquainted, but I hear from everybody that her character is irreproachable, and her manners most amiable. Your Royal Highness knows, too, that I have not in my mind the same objection to intermarriages with princes and subjects which many have. But, under the present circumstances, a marriage at present appears to me to be the most desperate measure for all parties concerned that their worst enemies could have suggested."

Such was this well-reasoned appeal. The singular suggestions, given in italics—and which the late Earl Russell, with some want of candour, suppressed—were not meant in a cynical or offensive sense, but as the sincere advice of "a man of pleasure," who had himself married a courtesan.* It literally recalls the suggestions of Sir Pertinax Macsycophant to the clergyman in the play. To

* Mrs. Fox lived till recently. She has been described to the author, by one who visited her, as a rather vulgar old lady, with a cockney pronunciation. Nothing shows Fox's power, and the fascination he exercised over his friends, more than the hearty receptions extended to this lady.

this the Prince did not reply for more than a day, and then at two o'clock in the morning.

THE PRINCE OF WALES TO MR. FOX.

"Carlton House, December 11, 1785.

"Sunday Morning, 2 o'clock.

"DEAR CHARLES,

"Your letter of last night afforded me more true satisfaction than I can find words to express, as it is an additional proof to me, w^h I assure you I did not want, of y^r having y^t true regard and affection for me, w^h it is not only y^e wish but y^e ambition of my life to merit. Make yourself easy, my dear friend; believe me the world will now soon be convinced y^t there not only is, but never was, any ground for these reports, w^h of late have been so malevolently circulated. I have not seen you since the apostacy of Eden. I think it ought to have y^e same effect upon all our friends y^t it has upon me; I mean the linking us closer to each other; and I believe you will easily believe these to be my sentiments, for you are perfectly well acquainted with my ways of thinking upon these sort of subjects. When I say my ways of thinking, I think I had better say my old maxim, w^h I ever intend to adhere to; I mean y^t of swimming or sinking with my friends. I have not time to add much more, except just to say y^t I believe I shall meet you at dinner at Bushey on Tuesday, and to desire you to believe me at all times, my dear Charles,

"Most affectionately yours,

"GEORGE P."

A weak nature might be inclined to justify itself to itself by the quibble that what Fox had deprecated had not yet taken place. Even had it been arranged for, he might think that, having the power of changing his mind, he could still fairly deny it. What might be the truth of the case, is that like many such fickle and impulsive characters, he was for the moment convinced by Fox, and gave in his adhesion in an exaggerated fashion, though that evening he may have veered round again. No doubt, too, he believed in his statement that "there not only is, but never was, any grounds for these reports." It is amusing to read his affirmation of his old maxim, "which I ever intend to adhere to; I mean that of swimming or sinking with my friends."

Almost on that day week, December 21st, the marriage was solemnised! Nor was this, unhappily, to be the last of these equivocations. There was to come the denial to Grey, and, worse

still, the instruction to Fox to utter a more public denial, based on his own solemn assurance.

"A certificate of this marriage," says Lord Stourton, "is extant in the handwriting of the Prince, and with his signature and that of Mary Fitzherbert. The witnesses' names were added; but at the earnest request of the parties, in a time of danger, they were afterwards cut out by Mrs. Fitzherbert herself, with her own scissors, to save them from the peril of the law. This she afterwards regretted; but a letter of the Prince, on her return to him, has been preserved to supply any deficiency, in which he thanks God that the witnesses to their union were still living; and moreover, the letter of the officiating clergyman is still preserved, together with another document with the signature and seal, but not in the handwriting, of the Prince, in which he repeatedly terms her his wife."

These, however, could not have been the sole witnesses of the ceremony; for it has been stated that Mr. Orlando Bridgman—later Lord Bradford—was present.* Also General Keppel, according to Mr. Raikes.† This was to be expected, the general being a constant favourite of the Prince, and long attached to his household. There were also present her brother and cousin.

It was often speculated who the clergyman was that had taken on himself so perilous a duty, and it may be conceived that here was a most serious difficulty. Application was made to one Rosenhagen, a disreputable military chaplain, a singular roystering sort of clergyman. Among his papers was found the correspondence on this subject.

"Colonel Gardner, the Prince's private secretary, writes, asking R. to perform the ceremony. R. replies that it would be contrary to law for him to do so, and, if done, would be productive of important, probably disastrous, consequences to the whole nation. The colonel answers that the Prince is aware of all that, but pledges himself to keep the matter a profound secret, and that the Prince will feel bound to reward R. for such a proof of his attachment, as soon as the means are in his power. Rosenhagen, in reply, says he can trust implicitly the Prince's promise of secrecy, but he dare not betray the duty he owes to the Prince by assisting in an affair that might bring such serious consequences to him. Lady Francis says she 'believes Rosenhagen declined the business because no *specific* offer was made to him, and not from the motives stated in the letters, as he was daring and unscrupulous.' "

Another clergyman consented to undertake the dangerous

* Lady C. Bury, "Diary of the Times of George IV."

† "Raikes's Diary," i. 189, ed. 1858.

office, but, at the last moment, drew back, alarmed by warnings made by one who suspected what was the fact. Parson Johnes was long supposed to have been the person. A clergyman was, however, at last found, whose name was kept secret, though it would appear to have eventually become known; for, in the year 1796, Mr. Abbott, the Speaker, learned from Mr. Barton that "the Rev. Mr. Burt, of Twickenham, actually married the Prince of Wales to Lady Fitzherbert, and received five hundred pounds for doing it, as he himself declared to his family on his death-bed."* Lord Holland's account, which he received from some unnamed friend of Mrs. Fitzherbert, is admittedly absurd as regards the religious portion, and, in the eyes of anyone at all acquainted with the Roman Catholic religion, ridiculous:

"It was at the Prince's own earnest and repeated solicitations, not at Mrs. Fitzherbert's request, that any ceremony was resorted to. She knew it to be invalid in law; she thought it nonsense, and told the Prince so. . . . It was performed by an English clergyman. A certificate was signed by him and attested by two witnesses, both, I believe, Catholic gentlemen, and one a near relation of Mrs. Fitzherbert, Mr. Errington. Mrs. Fitzherbert, from mixed feelings of fear and generosity, tore off the names of the witnesses at some subsequent period, lest they should by possibility be involved in any legal penalties for being present at an illegal transaction. Before George the Fourth's accession to the throne, or, as I believe, his appointment to the Regency, the clergyman was dead (for it was not, as often surmised, Parson Johnes who married them); and his name, I understand, remains annexed to the instrument purporting to be a register or certificate of the ceremony."

It was owing to this statement and others of a similar kind by this nobleman, that Mrs. Fitzherbert's vindication was published by Mr. Charles Langdale.

It may be imagined that this union was for her but the opening of a series of humiliations and trials. So volatile and unstable a character as his—and it must be said, so little regulated by principle—was not likely to ensure comfort. "During the commencement of her union," we are told, "the attachment of that fickle Prince still existed; few were the happy hours that she could number even at that period. He was young, impetuous, and boisterous in his character, and very much addicted to the pleasures of the table. It was the fashion in those days to drink very hard, and Mrs. Fitzherbert never retired to rest till her royal spouse came home. But I have heard the late Duke of York say, that often when she heard the Prince and his drunken companions

* "Diary of Lord Colchester," i. 68.

on the staircase, she would seek a refuge from their presence even under the sofa, when the Prince, finding the drawing-room deserted, would draw his sword in joke, and searching about the room, would at last draw forth the trembling victim from her place of concealment."* She was, unhappily, to furnish one more instance of the experience that those, who voluntarily place themselves in a position liable to be falsely construed, must be content to accept the penalty in the worst construction that can be put upon their situation. She confessed long after that they were very happy and very poor, and went through many difficulties together very cheerfully.†

In the spring of this year the Duke of Chartres, now Duke of Orleans, forced him into a sort of rivalry of extravagance. They contended in sumptuous entertainments at the Jockey Club, where deep play was carried on. The Prince was said to have lost wagers to the Duke of Queensberry, Count O'Kelly, and others. His present style of carriage and horses was now a "phaeton and six," a postilion directing the two leaders. His stud was costing him thirty thousand pounds a year, and he was living in a more reckless style than usual. This situation was indeed almost desperate.

It will be seen from this that unfortunately he had now added to his already expensive pursuits that most costly one—the keeping of a racing stable, with the consequent taste for betting on the turf. Newmarket was his favourite resort, where he would stay at Queensberry House with its owner, and have uproarious nights with "Old Q.," Fox, and his friends. A love of horseflesh was deeply seated in his nature, and to the day of his death he delighted in all that concerned racing, hunting, and horses generally. There was in those days, when racing had not been brought to a system, a more passionate ardour for the sport, and a more healthy enjoyment in it than there is now. Many stories were current as to the Prince's winnings and losses; and it was said that on the occasion of his taking his guest the Duke of Orleans to Newmarket, he had won a sum of thirty thousand pounds. The probabilities are that at this stage he lost and lost heavily. As he grew older, however, he lost his taste for this perilous vice.

We now hear of Carlton House, where a grand entertainment had been given to the persons who had supported the host during the late crisis. Then began the series of various festivities. A

* "Raikes's Diary," ii. 29.

† The Duke of Wellington repeated to Mr. Greville a story of Mrs. Fitzherbert's having to borrow money to take the Prince down to Newmarket.

curious spectacle was a grand assault of arms, that took place between various famous professors of fencing—St. George (the foreign artist), Angelo, and others. This was followed by a match between St. George and the famous Chevalier (or Chevalière) D'Eon, who, dressed in woman's clothes, succeeded in vanquishing the victor. The Prince himself then took the foils, and fenced with the Chevalier, and was complimented on his graceful attitudes.*

We see him next at "a grand match at tennis between two French markers, Barcelon and Bergeron—the two best, I believe, now in the world." It is Sir G. Elliot who tells the story. "He was accompanied by a Monsieur St. George, a famous French mulatto, celebrated for his skill in fencing, music, and most other accomplishments, beyond other men, and almost as remarkable in this sort of fame as the Admirable Crichton, whom you may have read of. The Prince was also attended by Mr. Hesse, now commonly called the Prince of Hesse, and who is more with the Prince than is creditable."

We find him also following the new craze of mesmerism—attending the *séances* of Maimaduc, a professor of the delusion, and submitting to be operated upon before a company of fashionable persons. The operation was partially successful, and the Prince nearly succumbed to his influence. Thus was society rushing from one hobby and excitement to another, as in our own day it passes capriciously from rinking, to tableaux, blue china, and a hundred such whims.

It was not surprising, after this round of dissipation, that at the end of the year he should have been attacked by illness, "in consequence," the public was informed, "of having drunk some cooling liquor while heated with dancing." He was "in perfect health" on the Guildford course, came up to the Duchess of Gordon's assembly, and sent on to Lady Gideon's that he should be with her to supper. On reaching her hall, after this busy day, he found himself unable to go upstairs, and was transported home in a sedan-chair. He could not leave his house for a fortnight. He was, indeed, all through his course, subject to attacks of the kind. Boxing, too, had engaged his attention, and he was, for a time, an earnest patron of the "noble science." The company such pursuits introduced him to may be conceived.

* There is an engraving of this curious scene.

CHAPTER X.

1786—1787.

It will be recollected that, when the Prince contracted his engagement to Mrs. Fitzherbert, he was engaged in appealing to his father to extricate him from his difficulties. It is curious to find that the earliest results of the improvident step he had taken were to be involved, in a strange way, with his pecuniary embarrassments, and the sagacious predictions of Mr. Fox to be verified. Here, too, was to arise the first of these unseemly contests between the father and son, which were to be the scandal of many years.

All attempts to arrange his extrication with the King having failed, it was determined to bring the matter before the House; not by way of formal motion, but incidentally. It happened, fortunately for this purpose, that an application had to be made to the House for an increase to the King's allowance for payment of a large debt, and Fox, with some point, called attention to the fact that while his Majesty enjoyed nine hundred and fifty thousand pounds a year, his son had but fifty thousand.

Pitt answered, in his coldest and most indifferent fashion, "that he was not instructed to make any communication to the House respecting the royal family;" adding that "he should avoid the presumption of expressing any private opinion on the subject." Alderman Newnham supported the demand. Fox then threw out a menace that before the session ended he would bring a motion formally before the House.

This injudicious step was not likely to further an arrangement. Mr. Pitt, however, had declared that if he received the King's commands he would, as a matter of course, take up the business,

thus encouraging a fresh attempt. Mr. Hugh Elliott undertook, with the assistance of Sheridan, to make new proposals. He repaired to Mr. Pitt, with a modest demand for two hundred and fifty thousand pounds; the debts amounting to some hundred and fifty thousand. The minister affected to be inclined to furnish the sum, provided a balance was set aside for "some specific purposes." This, however, was declined. The King was then once more approached, and he too affected to receive the proposals graciously, asking for a detailed statement of liabilities. This was furnished to him, and after some further delay a final answer was sent, his Majesty positively declining to accept the terms, and declaring that neither then nor at any future time would he sanction an increase to his son's income. This communication was made in harsh terms, and "not very civil."

"As soon as the Prince received the King's letter from Lord Southampton, he told him he must think of the answer for some hours, but begged of his lordship not to lose sight of him; that let that answer be what it might, his lordship should be able to assure the King from his own knowledge, that he had not seen or been advised in the writing of the answer by any of those people, friends of his, that had the misfortune of being under his Majesty's displeasure. He accordingly, after six hours' thinking, sat down and wrote to the King, telling him his determination of giving up forty thousand pounds a year to the payment of his debts."*

No doubt the King was alarmed by this threat, and wrote that he had not said absolutely he would not pay his debts; but if the Prince chose to take a rash step, he must likewise take the consequences.

THE PRINCE OF WALES TO THE KING.

"SIR,

"I have had the honour of receiving your Majesty's written message transmitted to me by Lord Southampton, and am greatly concerned that my poor sentiments cannot coincide with those of your Majesty, in thinking that the former message which I had the honour of receiving, in your Majesty's own hand, was not a refusal. After having repeatedly sent in various applications to your Majesty, for two years successively, representing that a partial reduction out of so incompetent an income as mine was to no purpose towards the liquidation of a debt where the

* Letter from "a distinguished person connected with the Court," quoted by Mr. Wallace in his "History of the Life and Reign of George IV.," i. 136.

principal and interest were so considerable, I this year humbly requested your Majesty that you would be graciously pleased (having previously laid my affairs before you, sir, for your inspection, and painted them in the distressed colours which they so justly merited), whenever it suited your conveniency, to favour me with a decisive answer; as the various delays which have occurred, through the course of this business, have in reality proved more pernicious to me in the situation in which I have been for some time past involved, than the original embarrassment of the debt. To not only these, but to any future delays, would I most willingly have submitted, had they merely rested upon my own patience; but the pressing importunities of many indigent and deserving creditors (some of them whose very existence depends upon a speedy discharge of their accounts) made too forcible an appeal to the justice becoming my own honour, and to the feelings of my heart, to be any longer delayed. Another consideration is, that any further procrastination might have exposed me to legal insults, as humiliating to me as I am persuaded that they would be offensive to your Majesty. I therefore, previously to my having the honour of receiving that message to which your Majesty has referred me, had determined, that should I not be so fortunate as to meet with that relief from you, sir, with which I had flattered myself, and which I thought I had the greatest reason to expect, I would exert every nerve to render that just redress and assistance to my creditors which I cannot help thinking is denied to me. These are the motives, sir, that have actuated my conduct in the step I have taken, of reducing every expense in my family, even those to which my birth and rank entitle me (and which I trust will ever continue to be the principle and guide of my conduct), till I have totally liberated myself from the present embarrassments which oppress me; and the more so as I am persuaded that such a line, when pursued with consistency, will meet with the approbation of every candid and dispassionate mind.

"I will not trespass any further on your Majesty's time, but have the honour to subscribe myself,

"Sir,

"Your Majesty's most dutiful and obedient

"Son and Subject,

"G. P.

"July 9th, 1786."

Of this document the Prince made copies, and gave them away to all his friends. Thus all negotiations ended for the present. It may be conceived what evil passions were raging on

both sides : disappointment, mortification, jealousy, and, it is to be feared, a longing for revenge and humiliation of the adversary. Prompted, it may be assumed, by pique rather than by a desire to economise, the Prince proceeded to carry out the undignified scheme of retrenchment he had threatened, and held himself out to the nation as a prince reduced to poverty and straits by the barbarity of his father and his father's advisers. Without a day's delay, he broke up his establishment, announced the sale of his stud, shut up half the rooms at Carlton House, stopped all the works, and ostentatiously proclaimed that he was setting aside forty thousand pounds a year for his debts. The heir-apparent's carriages and horses were sold by public auction (the whole realising but seven thousand pounds) to the annoyance, no doubt, of the Court. Coupled with this was the renewed announcement of self-expatriation. To this course he was stimulated by his friend Mr. Fox, who gave him great commendation. Lord Grey recollected the Prince showing him this letter :

THE PRINCE OF WALES TO MR. FOX.

"Brighton, July 19th, 1786.

"MY DEAR CHARLES,

"I am more obliged to you than I can possibly express for the contents of y^e letter I yesterday received from you, and am more and more convinced of the necessity of pursuing that plan w^h, I assure you, I never should have adopted had I not intended to have gone thr^o with it. With regard to the other plan you mention I approve most highly of it, but shall not touch upon it at all at present, as I mean to be in London for a few hours on Monday next, when I hope to have the pleasure of seeing you, and of discussing the matter fully at length. At twelve o'clock I shall be ready to receive you at Carlton House. I will not trespass any further upon y^r patience at present, but conclude, with assuring you, that no one can feel more sensibly every mark of y^r friendship and regard, than

"Your sincerely affectionate,

"GEORGE P."

"How noble, how good!" was the cry of friends and foes, according to the partial view of his friends. His own immediate dependents submitted cheerfully to the reductions required. The only exception was Colonel Hotham, who, having one thousand pounds a year in his household, with "poundage" in other salaries, begged that the loss would be made up to him, as it was hard that he should suffer. The Prince condescended even to make use of

his friends' equipages, as he had none of his own. And the heir-apparent was seen travelling from London to Brighton in a common postchaise.

It may be conceived that after these incidents what animosity raged between the partisans of the Court and of the Prince. The King had certainly behaved with harshness, and, it was stated, used to make merry over the dilapidated condition of the works at his son's palace, exhibiting derisively to his courtiers, by way of contrast, a model of the projected improvements which his son had sent him. The Prince's party were not slow to retort in the most disrespectful fashion. They pointed out, as evidence of the King's lack of paternal feeling and dislike of his offspring, that at that moment his five sons had all been sent away out of the country.*

This, indeed, has always seemed an awkward fact, ignored by historians and panegyrists of the King, that, on many occasions, he had to come with heavy debts to Parliament, applying for relief; and, while he upbraided his son for his outlay, the latter might have retorted that the Sovereign had received enormous sums. "A caricature represented the King and Queen coming out of the Treasury loaded with money-bags, and the Prince accompanying them in the poor habiliments of the prodigal son."

These savings were the result of the almost penurious economy that reigned in the royal household. From the time of the King's marriage, it had been ordered on the most careful and saving principles—as we may learn from the royal ledgers, beautifully and clearly kept for many years, and which are to be seen in the British Museum. There we find it set out that, in 1762, all the bills for milliners, mercers, shoemakers, etc., for the Queen and family, amounted to about four thousand pounds, of which nine hundred and eighty pounds went to the milliner, Mrs. MacEune. This moderate estimate was scarcely exceeded, even as the family increased and grew up. In 1806, the establishment consisted of but seven coachmen, six postilions, four helpers, eight hobbygrooms, eight footmen, three chairmen, one bolleman, and the total cost of salaries, etc., was about eighteen thousand pounds a year. But in this year, as there

* The Duke of York was at Hanover, Prince William at sea, Prince Edward at Geneva, the Dukes of Cumberland and Gloucester were living abroad in a state of poverty and disgrace, and the remainder were at Gottingen University. "Only the oldest," says Sir Nathaniel Wraxall, "remained at home, in a dismantled palace, all the state apartments of which were shut up, his establishment dismissed, and himself reduced, in external, to the condition of a private gentleman."

were the six princesses to maintain and clothe, the bills for the wardrobe linen reached to some thirteen thousand pounds. This seems moderation itself.

An incident that occurred about this time shows this view of the vindictiveness of the Court. When the King's life was attempted by Margaret Nicholson, his son, who was at Brighton, was left to learn the event from the letter of a friend. With good feeling that did him honour, he instantly took post, and hurried to Windsor. It will hardly be credited that the King, though in the next room to the one in which the Queen received her son, refused to see him.*

The Prince was at this time in a state of almost actual penury. He lived at houses lent to him, like that of the Earl of Gloucester's at Bagshot. He was indeed reduced to such a plight that he was driven to the perilous and undignified course of becoming the debtor of a foreign prince. The Duke of Orleans was this year on a trip to London, and with him had come the Dukes of FitzJames, Coigny, and Polignac. Indeed, the people had begun to satire and ridicule these visits, and a fellow had insulted the French Prince at Newmarket, saying he knew he was the Duke of Orleans, and that he ought to be in his own country defending his King. Eager to be more English than the English, he had presented himself at a dinner-party, dusty and dirty, in a morning suit, his buttons enamelled with horses and dogs, which he displayed with some pride to the lady beside him.

His inflamed scorbutic face was seen everywhere—at Brookes's, at the theatre. At the Prince's desire he had sat to Sir Joshua for a fine full-length portrait, abounding in spirit and power. Being rich, and seeing the distress of his friend, the French prince pressed on him a substantial loan. The news of this transaction came from Paris to the Duke of Portland, who wrote in much alarm to Sheridan, in December, 1786: "I have received a confirmation of the intelligence; the particulars varied in no respect from those I related to you, except in the addition of a pension, which is to take place immediately on the event which entitles the creditors to payment, and it is to be granted for life to a nominee of the Duke of Orleans. The loan was mentioned in a mixed company by two of the Frenchwomen and a Frenchman, in Calonne's presence (then Minister of Finance), who begged them, for God's sake, not to talk of it. I am going to Bulstrode, but will return at a moment's notice if I can be of the least use in getting rid of this odious engagement."

* There was a punctilio raised: the Prince assuming that his visit was a sufficient declaration of his wishes; the King declaring that his son had not asked to see him.

Sheridan seems to have exerted himself, for the duke writes to thank him for what he had done, and seems to hope that the matter will end favourably.* Fox's aid was also invoked, and he recovered the bonds and brought them to the Prince. This was to be but the beginning of a number of similar operations in the foreign market. It is stated by Mr. Moore that when Fox came to remonstrate with him on this foolish step, the Prince persisted in denying there was any truth in the matter, until Mr. Fox convicted him by drawing one of the bonds out of his pocket.

In all these transactions public sympathy, not unnaturally, was on the Prince's side. For several months he pursued his plan of economy, his debts under a certain amount being cleared off, and nine per cent. on the larger sums being paid. This praiseworthy economy being known, many members of the House felt that his situation was unbecoming the nation, and were eager to extricate him. And proceedings now followed, which, however, were only to bring fresh scandal, and further inflame the bitterness between him and his father.

A meeting of the Prince's friends, or supporters, was now held at Mr. Pelham's (afterwards Lord Chichester), at which the Prince was present, for the purpose of concerting what fresh measures were to be taken when the debate was renewed. It was determined to press the matter on. But it was felt that the ground was tender, and the Prince must have been disagreeably surprised during the interval at having a very serious question put to him by his friend Mr. Fox, and to which he gave only too distinct and satisfactory an answer. This referred to Mrs. Fitzherbert.

It was accordingly settled, early in 1787, that the matter should be brought before the House, not by the Prince's friends, but by some independent member.

This step was opposed to the advice of the Duke of Portland and the leading Whigs, except Mr. Fox, who all held that the interest of their party must be considered, and that the advocacy of the Prince's very weak case would damage them with the country. This led to a serious quarrel between the Duke and the Prince, which was only made up two years later. It helps to prove what was before pointed out—that the Prince's politics chiefly were regulated by his own interests. It will be seen, however, that it somewhat supports his vindication of his change of politics—viz. that he was not so much bound to the party as to Mr. Fox, whose follower he was. Accordingly, on April 20th, Alderman Nathaniel Newnham, a City merchant, put a question to Mr. Pitt: "Whether he proposed taking any steps to rescue the

* Moore, "Life of Sheridan."

Prince from his embarrassed and distressed situation?" He was answered by the minister, in his usual cold strain, that he had no commands from the King in reference to the matter; on which the questioner gave notice that on May 4th he would bring forward a motion on the subject.

This was the signal for joining battle. Mr. Pitt, a few days later, required to know the shape and purpose of the motion, which the other declined to furnish. While all were wondering at this strange allusion, Mr. Rolle followed, alluding to something which he said "involved matters of Church and State." The Prime Minister indeed threw out what was certainly a menace, alluding darkly to what he called "the delicacy of the question," adding that "the private knowledge he possessed on the subject made him particularly desirous of avoiding it; but, if it were absolutely determined to bring it forward, he would, however distressing it might prove to him as an individual, discharge his duty to the public, and enter fully into the subject; the minister seemed to endorse the allusion by significant nods and gestures.* There could scarcely be a mistake as to what was intended. Yet, possibly seeing the advantage he had given his opponents, he sent for Lord Southampton, who waited on the Prince the following morning with his excuses or explanations. The latter was adroit enough to see his advantages, and told him that he never received verbal messages except from the King." From that time, we are told, he was eager to declare he was not married.

On the 27th, Mr. Newnham signified to the House that the motion he intended to make would be to the following effect: "That an humble address be presented to his Majesty, praying him to take into his royal consideration the present embarrassed state of the affairs of the Prince of Wales, and to grant him such relief as his royal wisdom should think fit, and that the House would make good the same." Several members on both sides of the House having risen to deprecate the further discussion of this business, and to express their earnest wishes that it might be accommodated in some other manner, Mr. Sheridan declared that the insinuations and menaces, which had been thrown out upon a former occasion, made it impossible for the Prince to recede with honour. He said he had the highest authority to declare that his Royal Highness had no other wish than that every circumstance in the whole series of his conduct should be most minutely and accurately inquired into, and that he was ready, as a peer of Great Britain, to give in another place the most direct answers to any questions that might be put to him.

Mr. Rolle observed that if the motion proposed was per-

* "Auckland's Memoirs," pp. 1-47.

sisted in, he should state without reserve his sentiments upon the subject he had alluded to, according as the matter struck him.

Mr. Pitt declared that he had been greatly misunderstood if it was conceived that he meant to throw out any insinuations injurious to the character of the Prince. He added that he had only referred to his pecuniary affairs and to the correspondence which had passed.

It seems amazing that Mr. Pitt, and so many statesmen of the same political honour, could condescend to the sort of equivocation that is implied in explanations of this kind. There can be no doubt that what was in his mind when he uttered the threat was the ceremony that had been gone through with Mrs. Fitzherbert, for there was nothing in the revelation of the pecuniary details that could be of an alarming "or delicate" nature; or, if there were, it was clear that the publication of such matters as reprisal would hardly add to the discredit of the Prince.

All doubt being thus removed, when the House met again on April 30th, Alderman Newnham declared that in all these insinuations he saw no dangers, the Prince saw none, and it was by his desire that he was now proceeding. Highly as he was honoured by the Prince's confidence, he was not to be intimidated.

Then Fox rose, his interposition giving rise to a most exciting episode, declaring that as to the correspondence there was no objection to let it be seen. After dwelling on the debts, etc., he came to the real point of the whole, and, in carefully-weighed words, prompted by the Prince, made this declaration as to the marriage. He said: "If allusion were made to a certain low and malicious rumour, which had been industriously propagated without doors, he was authorized to declare it to be a falsehood. He had thought that a tale fit only to impose upon the lowest of the vulgar could not have gained credit for a moment in that House, or with anyone who possessed the most ordinary portion of common sense and reflection; but when it appeared that an invention so gross and malicious, a report of a fact which was actually impossible to have happened, had been circulated with so much industry and success as to have made an impression upon the minds of the members of that House, it both proved the uncommon pains taken by the enemies of the Prince of Wales to depreciate his character and injure him in the opinion of his country. He concluded with adding that he was further authorized by his royal highness to declare that he was ready, as a peer of Parliament, to answer in the other House any the most pointed questions that could be put to him respecting this report, or to afford his Majesty or his ministers any other assur-

ances or satisfaction they might require." Knowing that the papers lying at the present moment in the cellars of Messrs. Coutts's bank were then in existence, we listen with astonishment to this extraordinary declaration.

Mr. Rolle replied that "the right honourable member had said that the fact alluded to was impossible to have happened. They all knew, indeed, that there were certain laws and Acts of Parliament which forbade it, and made it null and void; but still it might have taken place, though not under the formal sanction of law; and upon that point he wished to be satisfied."

Mr. Fox observed, that "though what he had said before was, he thought, sufficient to satisfy every candid and liberal mind, he was willing, if possible, to satisfy the most perverse. When he denied the calumny in question, he meant to deny it, not merely with regard to the effect of certain existing laws, but to deny it *in toto*, in point of fact as well as law. The fact not only never could have happened legally, but never did happen in any way whatsoever, and had from the beginning been a base and malicious falsehood." Mr. Rolle rose again, and desired to know whether what Mr. Fox had last said was to be understood as spoken from direct authority? Mr. Fox replied that he had direct authority.

Still the sturdy Rolle—having a suspicion of the truth—declined to say that he was satisfied, though assailed by Sheridan and the upright Grey, who accepted the statement. The county member was, alas! justified in his incredulity. It was, of course, a complete victory for the Prince. No one would have calculated on his meeting these obscure insinuations by so complete, triumphant, and wholesale a denial! There can be no defence and no extenuation to be attempted beyond this, that the voluptuary's senses become so clouded by indulgence that he comes to view all that brings him inconvenience as something that should not be, and therefore—is not.

The effect on the friends of his own party—Sir G. Elliot among others—was complete. Sir Gilbert had been much "disturbed" by the delicate subject of the Prince's connection and the constituent dangers and doubts belonging to this "most equivocal position of things." He thought it all too serious to be excused by "the levity of youth." He was delighted, therefore, to hear the charge denied so explicitly. "Fox," he says, "declared, by authority from the Prince, in the fullest and most unequivocal manner, that there was not the smallest foundation of any sort for the story of the marriage with Mrs. Fitzherbert. Rolle hinted at the distinction between a legal marriage and some ceremony that might satisfy the consciences of some persons, but Fox

rejected any such distinction, and asserted again that there never had been the slightest ground for this slander, either legally or illegally, and, in a word, denied positively from the Prince himself the whole of this slander, in words so strong and so unqualified that we must believe him." What were Mr. Fox's feelings, when, on entering Brookes's after the debate, he was accosted by a gentleman,* who said: "Mr. Fox, I see by the public papers you have denied the Prince's marriage to Mrs. Fitzherbert. You have been misinformed: I was present at the marriage!" No arguments or explanations could have been so convincing. It was a *coup de théâtre*. Here was the voice of a witness who had seen the transaction. Mr. Fox felt, in a moment, in what a humiliating and embarrassing position he stood.

But the unfortunate lady's position was indeed pitiable. Well might Pitt, or Selwyn whose wit age had not withered, quote from Othello: "Villain! be sure you prove my love" etc. But the Prince was not without resource. On the very next morning he entered her room gaily, and said: "Only conceive, Maria, what Fox did yesterday! He went down to the House and denied you and I were man and wife. Did you ever hear of such a thing!" She made no reply, but turned pale. The duplicity was double-dyed. Having committed his friend, and gained the advantage he sought, he proceeded to disavow him.

She saw that her fate was sealed. On her indignation and reproaches he was ready to make all amends, and remove the mischief, now that his case had been made with the House of Commons and the public. He sent for Mr. Grey, and, after much preamble, and pacing in a hurried manner about the room, exclaimed: "Charles certainly went too far last night. You, my dear Grey, shall explain it;" and then, in distinct tones, "as Grey," adds Lord Holland, "has, since the Prince's death, assured me, though with prodigious agitation, owned that a ceremony had taken place." Mr. Grey observed that Mr. Fox must unquestionably suppose that he had authority for all he said, and that if there had been any mistake it could easily be rectified by his royal highness speaking to Mr. Fox himself, and setting him right on such matters as had been misunderstood between them. "No other person can," he added, "be employed without questioning Mr. Fox's veracity, which nobody, I presume, is prepared to do." A reply such as this might be expected from a man of Mr. Grey's character. "It," he said, "chagrined, disappointed, and agitated the Prince exceedingly," and, after some exclamations of

* This may have been Mr. Orlando Bridgman, afterwards Lord Bradford.

annoyance, he threw himself on the sofa, muttering: "Well, Sheridan must say something."*

But, unhappily, we have to go farther, and follow this complicated intrigue into fresh deceptions.

The Prince succeeded in persuading Mrs. Fitzherbert that Fox had "exceeded his instructions." And it would seem that for nearly twenty years—to the day of his death—she never spoke to Fox again, believing that this gratuitous insult had come from him. We might be inclined to assume, from the Prince's letter to Fox of May 10th, and its affectionate tone, that Fox had not then had his eyes opened, or felt that he was bound, without being on friendly terms, to carry through the Prince's business.

It will be seen, indeed, in a moment, in what a painful and delicate position he stood, since, to vindicate himself, he would be obliged to publicly indict his principal of falsehood, and ruin his interests, and expose him to certain peril. How lightly that principal took the matter will be seen from the letter he wrote off to him at midnight after the debate:

"April 30th, 1787.

"Monday night, 12 o'clock.

"MY DEAR CHARLES,

"I beg to see you for five minutes to-morrow after I have seen Marsham and Powys, whom I beg you will desire to be at Carlton House at one o'clock to-morrow. When I see you I will relate to you what has passed between my friend and me relative to y^e seeing you. I feel more comfortable by Sheridan's and Grey's account of what has passed to-day. I have had a distant insinuation that some sort of message or terms are also to be proposed to me to-morrow. If you come a little after two you will be sure to find me.

"Ever affectionately yours,

"GEORGE P."

It is stated that Mr. Fox, when he discovered the dishonourable use that he had been put to, broke off his friendship with the Prince, and did not speak to him for a year. And this view is supported by a story told by "Coke of Norfolk" to Earl Russell. Fox had been paying his annual visit to Holkham, when, on the very day of his departure, his host received a message from the Prince announcing that he intended coming down next day. He thus missed meeting Fox, but at the dinner he

* Lord Holland, "Memoirs of the Whig Party."

ostentatiously twice gave a toast, "To the best man in England—Mr. Fox." Mr. Coke believed that he had come specially to meet his old friend.*

Fox, however, must have seen that it was idle keeping up his resentment with so irresponsible a character; and, indeed, their common political interests required reconciliation. Two years later, at the crisis of the regency, we find Sir G. Elliot delighted at Fox's going "to meet the Prince, which he thought a comfortable circumstance."†

Under this cruel and unmanly imputation, the behaviour of Mrs. Fitzherbert was admirable for its dignity. Her friends, she told Lord Stourton, "assured her that, in this discrepancy as to the assertion of Mr. Fox and the Prince, she was bound to accept the word of her husband. She informed him that the public supported her by their conduct on this occasion; for, at no period of her life were their visits so numerous at her house as on the day which followed Mr. Fox's memorable speech; and, to use her own expression, the knocker of her door was never still during the whole day."

She was visited with studious publicity by the Duchesses of Portland, Devonshire, and Cumberland, and her position in society suffered not the least change. Such was the extraordinary testimony to her private character. Some of the meaner parasites of the Prince, we are told, taking their master's cue, went about repeating the same insinuations against Mr. Fox.‡ That statesman did all he could to repair the wrong, and, when he came to power, offered to create her a duchess.

Nor was the poor lady yet to have peace. The crazed Lord George Gordon, who was about being put on his trial for libelling the Queen of France, unfortunately came to associate Mrs. Fitzherbert with the case. He introduced himself into her house with a subpoena, but was turned out by the servants; the police had to interfere to protect her.

The most extraordinary part of the transaction is, that more than thirty years after we find the Prince, then King, still denying his marriage. Mr. Croker, his friend and admirer, discussing this question, says: "We are bound in fairness to say that, on the

* Years after, Lord Holland was waiting to see the Prince, when Sheridan told him a history of some paper or letter which he had corrected or written for the Prince. When both were admitted to audience, the Prince began a story on the same subject, but of a totally different complexion, appealing for corroboration to Sheridan, who heartily gave it. "I could not tell which was the greatest liar!" said the listener.

† "Life of Sir G. Elliot," i. 238.

‡ "Life and Reign," i. 160.

appearance of Moore's 'Life of Sheridan,' George IV. deliberately and distinctly declared that there was not a word of truth in it, and that he never had any communication with Lord Grey upon the subject; and he further went on to deny 'that absurd story' of his supposed marriage." This we need hardly say was during Lord Grey's life, and was intended by the King to be publicly repeated.

Nor would we consider this, in the King, an instance of unblushing falsehood; for, at the time he made it, he had grown into a habit of self-delusion of the most extraordinary kind, partially favoured by a crowd of parasites and flatterers, who never ventured to contradict him or set him right on any subject. With this aid he had come, therefore, to think that his view of an incident, where he fancied he had been ill-treated, was the truth, and that what ought to have been had been. To these delusions belonged the well-known one of having been at Waterloo, and many others. Mr. Croker was but half convinced by his assurances, and at the same time doubts Lord Holland's accuracy, who, in his memoirs, reports the share of Lord Grey in the transaction. Fortunately, however, Lord Grey can speak for himself:

"I do not recollect having given him any account that would satisfy him. On the contrary, in a long conversation which I had with him, in which he was dreadfully agitated, the object was to get me to say something in Parliament for the satisfaction of Mrs. Fitzherbert, which might take off the effect of Fox's declaration. I expressly told him how prejudicial a continuance of the discussion must be to him, and positively refused to do what he desired. He put an end to the conversation abruptly by saying, "Well, if nobody else will, Sheridan must."*

Mr. Grey, who took part in all these transactions, was a young man of twenty-two, of great promise, who had just entered the House of Commons, and made an extraordinary impression. Mr. Addington was thus affected: "A new speaker presented himself to the House, and went through his first performance with an *éclat* which has not been equalled within my recollection. I do not go too far in declaring that, in the advantage of figure, voice, elocution, and manner, he is not surpassed by any member of the House."

The Prince seems to have taken an aversion to him from the rebuke implied in the rejection of his unworthy proposal, and it was curious that for more than forty years he was to find himself encountered and checked by the same

* Note by Lord Grey in the "Life" by General Grey.

cold, if not contemptuous, appreciation of his character, and the same air of reproof. Before Grey he seemed to feel abashed; he had the mortification of being forced to ask his aid at a crisis, when it was clearly shown to him that his shifty notions were understood and seen through, and the assistance was haughtily denied. It is certain that he was cordially disliked by George IV. to the day of his death. General Grey, indeed, speaks of those "idle stories," and quotes a letter of 1806, in disproof of the statement. But there can be little doubt of the fact.

The management of the parliamentary transactions, of which this was an incident, shows that the Prince was not unskilful in a certain kind of manœuvring. His own party were not united, as we have seen, in supporting his claims to the liberality of the nation. These dissentients, among whom were counted the Duke of Portland and other "old Whigs," he contrived to neutralise by gaining the favour of the country gentlemen. The bold denial of the marriage had secured this, and had, at the same time, put the Prime Minister in an awkward position.

He felt that resistance could be no longer offered. He sent a gracious message to the Prince, full of explanations, to which the latter replied bluntly that "he did not receive verbal messages; but that if the minister had any business with him he might come himself." This, however, was softened by a letter from the Duke of Cumberland to Mr. Dundas, written by the Prince's direction, prompted, it was said, by the Duchess of Gordon. Dundas came to Carlton House, and, over much wine, assured him of Mr. Pitt's friendliness. From an interview between the Prince and minister the happiest results followed. Mr. Pitt repaired to the King, a Cabinet Council succeeded, and it was intimated that his wishes would be complied with.

"The Prince," writes Lord Beauchamp, "begins a most active canvass of the House; applies by letter or personally to every little knot of members, and indirectly to almost every individual, offering to submit his plans and his interests to the country gentlemen, producing his accounts, showing every letter, and, by the specimen I have seen, he has been guarded to an extreme degree. In short, Marsham, Powis, Hussey, Pulteney, Astley, and others of that calibre, became converts to his cause, in spite of their original dislike to it. On this footing the business rested, when, the night before the motion was to be made, Mr. Pitt acquaints the Prince, by letter, with his Majesty's gracious intention to comply with his wishes, and only hints at previous explanations being made by the Prince, by which it was understood that in future he was to be no party man; but, whatever

interpretation was intended to be put upon them, the Prince instantly communicated his readiness to acquiesce, and personally to assure the King of his resolution to act in future as he would wish. The motion is, in consequence, laid aside, but to this letter, though four days have since elapsed, no answer was given till this morning, when the King signified his disapprobation to the increase of the Prince's allowance at all events, and also to the payment of his debts, unless the accounts to be produced to him of the amount should prove satisfactory. The Prince has accepted this qualified offer, and promises instantly to send a *précis* of his affairs." *

In the House of Commons, on the motion being withdrawn, Sheridan executed the delicate commission entrusted to him, to say something for the calumniated Mrs. Fitzherbert. "But, while the Prince's feelings had, no doubt, been considered on the occasion, he must take the liberty of saying, however some might think it a subordinate consideration, that there was another person entitled, in the judgment of every delicate and honourable mind, to the same attention; one, whom he would not venture otherwise to describe than by saying it was a name which malice or ignorance alone could attempt to injure, and whose conduct and character were entitled to the truest respect." A flowery tribute that was ridiculous, as it could only have meaning on the supposition that she was married to the Prince, and that Fox's statement was untrue. As was well said: "Mr. Fox had declared that a lady living with the Prince, to all exterior appearance, in the habits of matrimonial connection, had not the sanction of any canonical forms to support her; whilst, on the other hand, Mr. Sheridan reversed the picture, by representing her as a paragon of chastity, the possessor of every virtue, and the ornament of her sex."

To the Archbishop of Canterbury it naturally seemed all "very odd," particularly as he noted "that the lady was more received than she was, I think, and stands more forward." A singular circumstance in this debate was the announcement by the Prime Minister that nothing had occurred on the side of the Government to cause the withdrawal of the motion. He meant, probably, that no arrangement had been concluded or bargain made. The Prince wrote on that night to ask an explanation, on which Mr. Pitt volunteered to come to him and give it at Carlton House. On his arrival with Mr. Dundas he found Sheridan, on which he declined to enter on the business in presence

* See "Correspondence of Lord Auckland," p. 416; Wraxall's "Hist. Mem."; Lord Cornwallis's "Correspondence."

of one so opposed to the Government. On this the Prince desired both the inferior agents to withdraw. A long conference followed, at the close of which these written proposals were submitted:

"1st. That the Prince's debts should be paid, at least in part. 2nd. That a grant should be made to him for the completion of Carlton House. 3rd. That such reasonable increase should be made to his annual income as would prevent henceforth the necessity of his contracting debts." Mr. Pitt took his leave with these propositions, and immediately despatched them to the King at Windsor. Much negotiation followed, and it was said that the minister himself was disgusted by the shiftiness displayed by the King.*

THE PRINCE OF WALES TO MR. FOX.

"Carlton House, May 10th, 1787.

"MY DEAR CHARLES,

"No answer is come as yet from Pitt, excepting y^t he was to see y^e King to-night, and w^d endeavour to get everything settled if he c^d. Some sort of an answer I shall certainly have this evening, when he quits the Queen's House, w^h I will communicate to you as soon as possible after I have received it. His own statement y^t he has made out, as expenses for every year from the time I came of age, is thirty thousand pounds a quarter; consequently annually an hundred and twenty thousand pounds; y moment I get a copy of y^m I will transmit it to you for y^r inspection. In y^e meantime I beg you will not think of going to Newmarket till you have heard again from me; how late it may be I cannot answer for. Adieu, my dear friend. Pray excuse haste.

"Ever yours,

"G. P."

The King presently replied with his own hand, in a letter forwarded by Mr. Pitt to the Prince, to the following effect: 1st. That the King was gratified to find thè Prince ready to submit his debts to inspection. 2nd. That the Prince should set forth not only the amount of his debts, but the manner in which each particular debt was contracted. 3rd. That the Prince should engage not to contract debts in future. 4th. That upon compliance with the foregoing conditions would depend the King's consent to the payment of the Prince's debts, or any portion of them. 5th. That the King would not think any increase of income necessary, so long as the Prince of Wales remained unmarried.

* "Life and Reign," i. 165.

This counter-project was not found satisfactory, and Mr. Courtenay, one of the Prince's legal advisers, having quickened the negotiations by giving out that he would bring this delicate question before the House, on the 21st of May the minister brought down a royal message, recommending an increase to his son's income. The message added that there was "a well-grounded expectation" that his son would avoid contracting new debts. He demanded their aid to pay the debts, and engaged from his own Civil List to add ten thousand pounds a year to his income. The Prince had given his Majesty the fullest assurances of his firm determination to confine his future expenses within his income, and had settled a new scheme of checking the household expenses. An account was furnished to the House:

DEBTS OF THE PRINCE OF WALES.

Bonds and debts	£13,000
Purchase of houses	4,000
Expenses of Carlton House	53,000
Tradesmen's bills	90,804
	£160,804

EXPENDITURE FROM JULY, 1783, TO JULY, 1786.

Household, etc.	£29,277
Privy purse	16,050
Payments made by Col. Hotham, particulars delivered in to his Majesty	37,203
Other extraordinaries	11,406
	£93,936

Salaries	£54,734
Stables	37,919
Mr. Robins, etc.	7,059—£99,712
	£193,648

On the following day an address from the Commons was presented to the King, with its vote for a hundred and sixty-one thousand pounds, for payment of the debt, and a sum of sixty thousand pounds for the completion of Carlton House.*

This schedule was said not to correspond with the one first

* From a letter of Mr. Pitt's, in July, 1789, it would appear that Coutts, the banker, was employed as agent in the transaction. Forty thousand pounds were to be paid to the general creditors through Mr. Anstruther, while Captain Payne was to receive so large a sum as three thousand pounds for the Brighton creditors.—Rose, "Diaries," i. 105.

presented to the King, and it was understood that the debts of honour, etc., had been kept back, because the King declined to recognise them. The relief indeed was of the most temporary kind; there was no substantial increase to his income, the sum for Carlton House was but a third of what was necessary, and his position was really that of a man in hopeless difficulties, who has obtained a small supply to help to tide him on for a little. Exactly like such a person, the Prince was overjoyed at the relief, which might be an earnest of future aid. So far from an attempt being made to observe this solemn engagement to the King and nation, which common decency might have suggested, three years had not elapsed when his debts reached six hundred and fifty thousand pounds !

CHAPTER XI.

1787.

A RECONCILIATION immediately took place between the Prince and his father. The drawing-room on May 24th, it was remarked, was as fine and crowded as a Birthday. The Prince's household, now returned to their places, all kissed hands. The King was quite in spirits, and the Queen and her daughters beaming with delight. The impulsive Prince told everyone that he was resolved never again to quarrel with his father; a declaration too comprehensive not to excite a serious foreboding.*

On the following day an interview, three hours long, took place at the palace, at the end of which the penitent was introduced to his mother and sisters, when all was made up. By the much-injured Mrs. Fitzherbert he was also forgiven; and, at a most magnificent ball and supper given by Sir Sampson Gideon, the Prince sat at the head of the table, Mrs. Fitzherbert beside him, with all her particular friends grouped near him. Everyone had noticed that his attentions to her in public had of late been of the most marked kind.

The creditors, however, were not quite satisfied with the mode of liquidation, which they thought too slow. They were paid in instalments, a first dividend of nine per cent. being presently announced.

Reconciled to his son, the King was to be further gratified by the return of his favourite, the Duke of York, who arrived on August 2nd after an absence of seven years, during which time he had contrived to impress even Mirabeau unfavourably by his uproariousness and excess in wine. The Prince was then at

* Auckland, "Correspondence," i. 426.

Brighton, and the news found him at a supper where was the Princess of Lamballe, whence he rose to post all through the night to Windsor. He was fond of this grotesque and spasmodic mode of travel, for which there was no necessity, and which is, in truth, characteristic of the spendthrift, who loves telegraphing and expresses where mere trivialities are in question. Thus an air of real business is given to pleasure.

The meeting of the brothers is described as most affecting. After a moment's pause, during which they surveyed each other, they embraced affectionately. Then followed a happy family dinner; and if we are to accept the reports of the various chroniclers belonging to the Court, the simple raptures of the happy father, and his queen and his daughters, were more like what would occur in the circle of the good Vicar of Wakefield than among those recently engaged in a bitter and venomous family quarrel. The Duke, in truth, had returned a finished debauchee, arrayed in all the vices; he was delicate-looking and stooped, and in the splendid picture of him by Reynolds, where he is presented in all the splendour of robes and orders, he appears as an interesting, almost feminine-looking youth, with a rather weak and volatile expression. He was now to form a strict alliance with his brother.

For the Duke of York an establishment was formed at Oatlands Park, Weybridge (now an hotel), a place hereafter to be familiar to London men of fashion; having also a grotesque celebrity as the reign of riot and the grave of innumerable dogs, favourites of the Duchess. Frolic and frivolity now set in, and the royal brothers, in this new-found *camaraderie*, were to renew the old scandals. Indeed, those of the royal family who were older did not set the young men a good example. The Cumberlands, as we have seen, had openly encouraged the Prince of Wales in his hostility to his father.

One so flattered and followed often showed a capricious humour, which, in his later days, when he studied to support his character of first gentleman, he would not have exhibited. Thus, when dancing with the beautiful Lady Salisbury at a ball given by the Duchess of Devonshire, he suddenly quitted her and finished the measure with his more lovely hostess. The gay Captain Morris thus wrote on the incident :

Ungallant youth! Could royal Edward see
While Salisbury's garter decks thy faithless knee
That thou, false knight, hadst turned thy back and fled
From such a Salisbury as might wake the dead.
Quick from thy treacherous breast her badge he'd tear,
And strip the star that beauty planted there.

But, as the Duchess of York once said to Mr. Greville, there was a rude, coarse style of gentility then obtaining, which gave place to the good-natured manners of the later dandies. The Duke of Gloucester, whose attachment to his wife and sacrifices made for her are told in so sympathetic a fashion in Walpole's journals, had now transferred his admiration to Lady Tyrconnel, Lord Delaval's youngest daughter, "feminine and delicate in her appearance, with a profusion of light hair."

"How the men of business and the great orators of the House of Commons contrive to reconcile it with their exertions I cannot conceive," writes that most charming of public men, Sir Gilbert Elliot, to his wife. "Men of all ages drink abominably. Fox drinks what I should call a great deal, though he is not reckoned to do so by his companions, Sheridan excessively, and Grey more than any of them; but it is in a much more gentlemanly way than our Scotch drunkards, and is always accompanied with lively clever conversation on subjects of importance. Pitt, I am told, drinks as much as anybody."

The same observer describes a scene at Mrs. Crewe's, where three young men of fashion, Mr. Orlando Bridgman, Mr. Charles Greville, of the Picnic Club (a gentleman celebrated for his elegance of manners), and Mr. Gifford, were so drunk "as to puzzle a whole assembly. The last was a young gentleman lately come out, of good estate of about five thousand pounds a year, the whole of which he is in the act of spending in one or two years at most, and this without a grain of sense, without any fun to himself or entertainment to others. He never uttered a word, though as drunk as the other two, who were both riotous, and began at last to talk so plain that Lady Francis and Lady Valentine fled from the side table to ours, and Mrs. Sheridan would have followed them, but did not make her escape till her arms were black and blue, and her apron torn off."

Pitt, the model young minister, broke down in the House in the following year, owing to a debauch the night before at Lord Buckingham's, when in company with Dundas and the Duke of Gordon he took too much wine.* Indeed, the manners and customs of the times might be called "a precious school" for young princes, and there was no public opinion to check these vices. The lawlessness that was abroad reached even to the young, who disdained the control of their parents. When their consent was withheld, the result was improvident marriages with footmen and actors, and numerous elopements. Thus in this year the town was entertained with no less than three escapades, which occurred at

* "Court and Cabinets," i. 360.

the same time. "Lady Augusta Campbell is married to Mr. Clavering, the youngest son of General Clavering. His being only two-and-twenty, and Lady Augusta being a good many years older, makes people imagine that she rather ran away with him than he with her. They went away from the Duchess of Ancaster's, who saw masks that night. The Duchess of Argyll went home, and thought that Lady Augusta would soon follow her, but after sitting up till five o'clock, and no Lady Augusta returning, she sent in search of her to the Duchess of Ancaster's. No tidings were to be learned there of the fair fugitive. She, it seems, as soon as her mother went home, left the duchess's with Mr. Clavering, and went with him to Bicester, in Oxfordshire, where they were married. She, it is said, was married in her domino. Accounted as she was she plunged in. It is to be hoped she dropped the mask. The lover had been the day before to Cranbourne Alley, and had procured every kind of female dress necessary for Lady Augusta.

"Miss Clinton had, the day before she eloped, offered to take her oath on the Bible that she would not marry Mr. Dawkins without Sir Henry's consent. He, after her solemn protestations, did not think it necessary to administer the oath; and she, perhaps, imagining that at some other time he might, lost no time in escaping from the sin of perjury, and likewise from her father's house. Mr. Dawkins had posted half-a-dozen hackney-coaches at the different corners which lead into Portland Place, in order that he might elude all pursuit; for as soon as the hackney-coach in which he was set off, all the others likewise had their orders to set off too, and go where they liked.

"Lady Bowes lived in Fludyer Street, which you know is very narrow, and well it was, considering the bridge she passed to get to her lover, Mr. Jessop. She excused herself to her father for not coming down to supper, saying that it was inconsistent with female delicacy to be in company with so many men as were to sup with her father. As soon as everybody was gone to bed she passed a ladder which had a plank laid upon it, and which reached from her window to that of her lover. She must pass this bridge. She had never seen this man but at his window, before she went over to him."

Gambling at this time was in the highest vogue, faro and macao tables being found at the fashionable houses. This vice continued to rage until the dissolution of Crockford's, within living memory, when it assumed another shape, which now obtains—that of laying on horses instead of on dice or cards. The French ambassador was a particular votary, and, being struck down with a paralytic stroke at a drawing-room, did not on that account suspend his Sunday evening gaming reunions—and Sir

Nathaniel Wraxall attended one, when, "a faro-table being set out in one of the apartments, the company gambled at it while the ambassador lay in an adjoining room attended by physicians."

The King and his family, who had been in such delight at the promised reformation, were now to find their son breaking his promises, even the one which had been the *sine quâ non* of the agreement, that he would no longer join in political attacks. There was something most unbecoming in this violation of an honourable agreement, but the public had long ceased to be scandalised. His friend Erskine, after making a wild attack on the Government three hours' long, had been forced to desist from illness; he was comforted by the Prince of Wales, with whom he dined in the coffee-room at the House of Commons, and, after being well primed with brandy, was instigated to renew the attack. So gross was his language that a burst of hisses greeted him.*

No wonder the visits to Windsor grew less and less frequent, and at last were totally given up. But what must have wrung the heart of father and mother most, was to find the youth that had just been restored to them led by his brother into every vice, and competing with him in the race of a degrading notoriety; and there can be no reasonable doubt but that the agitation and anguish of these days contributed to the derangement of mind which was presently to declare itself.

Two of the Prince's close associates—Tarleton and Payne (the well-known Jack Payne)—being proposed at Brookes's, met with the affront of being blackballed, though the Prince himself had put them up. In disgust at this treatment, he and his brother determined to found a new and special club, where they could be free from the restraint of these old respectable Whigs who reigned at Brookes's.

Accordingly, the task of organising the club was conferred on his German cook, and after the custom of the time it was called "Weltjie's." Weltjie himself, with his broken English and familiarity, became the keeper under the royal patronage. He made money, and lived in one of the picturesque houses in Hammersmith Mall, where he was truly hospitable. He, however, lost the favour of his royal patron by his opposition to the marriage of one of his children which the Prince favoured, and who, crossed in his whim, dismissed him: "His manners," says Angelo, "were not very polished, but at the same time good-natured, and his humorous, eccentric anecdotes (of which he had so many) with his excellent dishes, so pleased his guests

that they were never out of patience in listening to them." Mr. Gronow gives another account of the convivial fashion in which this club was founded.

In this new *locale* play set in with new fury, and the royal pair became the victims. "The Prince has taught the Duke to drink in the most liberal way, and the Duke in return has been equally successful in teaching his brother to lose money at all sorts of play—quinze, hazard, etc.—to the amount, we are told, of very large sums, won by General Smith and Admiral Pigot, who both wanted it very much." This fatal passion the Duke had brought from Germany, and the frantic manner in which he now pursued it filled his more sober friends with apprehension. Even the Prince of Wales was heard to declare gravely that his brother of York "was too bad."*

It was during one of these riotous scenes that an amusing adventure occurred to the royal pair. As they were passing Hay Hill, hurrying to another scene of riot, they were stopped by footpads and robbed of their watches and money. Mr. Rogers heard the Duke of York relate the story, but seems to have misapprehended it. He assumed it to have been a genuine robbery, whereas it was a pleasant trick contrived by some of their boon companions. There was much jesting on the incident, and it was declared that the sum of money obtained from the pockets of both was of but trifling amount.

The Prince's gambling was pushed to an extent which, considering his recent promises, was scandalous. He was seen to lose two or three thousand pounds of a night.† His brother, the Duke of York, was not behindhand, his conduct being as bad as possible; "he plays very deep, and loses, and his company is thought *mauvais ton*."‡

Like other gentlemen of the town, our Prince had recourse in his necessities to the usurers.§ One of the most notorious money-lenders who came to his aid was a personage known as

* The Duke, at a convivial party, rising abruptly from the table, fell upon the floor; on which his brother exclaimed, solemnly: "There lie, as our royal father says, the hopes of the family."

† "Court and Cabinets," i. 363.

‡ Ibid.

§ It was at this time the practice of the Jews to frequent the gaming-houses in the morning, for the express purpose of purchasing the I O U's of the Prince. If the I O U was for five hundred pounds, a bond or some other solid security was given for six hundred pounds, the Jew selling to the Prince some trifling piece of plate, or an article of jewellery, for the extra hundred pounds. The Prince, in some instances, expressed his high sense of displeasure at this traffic in his negotiable securities. But, as in some instances he could not discharge his I O U from his immediate funds, it was a system of great convenience to have a resource always at hand by which his honour could be saved.—Huish, "Memoirs," i. 191.

"Jew Travis," or "Treves," with whom the Prince had transactions. Later came "Jew Solomon" and "Jew King." Lord Cornwallis, who had gone out to India, was, in the following year, applied to with great earnestness by the Prince to do something for a young *protégé* of his, also out there. The warmth of his intercession may have surprised Lord Cornwallis, who could not, however, set it down to the kindly feelings of his heart. The fact was, "young Treves" was son of "Jew Treves," which at once explained the solicitude exhibited for him.

THE PRINCE OF WALES TO LORD CORNWALLIS.

"Carlton House, March 12th, 1788.

"MY DEAR CORNWALLIS,

"Tho' I am sensible how much your time is taken up, I cannot help troubling you on a subject I have already mentioned to you. Having understood that the India directors have sent a species of order to have young Treves removed from his present situation, and feeling myself much interested in this young man's welfare, I cannot help, 1st, recalling to your mind that I took the liberty some time ago of recommending him particularly to your protection, and only hope that if his conduct has not been improper in his situation, you would not admit of his being an innocent sufferer. I trust to your goodness in forgiving the trouble I am now giving you, and that if any application is necessary to the subject here at home, you will be kind enough to inform me how I am to make it myself; or else I must trouble you once more in begging you to make it yourself for me and in my name. I am ever happy in any opportunity that offers itself of recalling myself to your remembrance, and assuring you how sincerely I remain,

"Your sincere Friend,
"GEORGE P."

The amiable feelings that had been awakened by the return of the second son had by this time given place to the old bitterness, and the relations between the King and his son had now come to be once more on the usual disastrous footing. The blame may be fairly divided between both parties, as will be evident from the harsh treatment extended to another son, Prince William, who had been at sea, and ventured to return without permission. He arrived at Plymouth, as will be shown later, and was detained there by his father. His royal brother hurried down to see him, and the party enjoyed themselves for some time together, in their own

riotous fashion, when the gay sailor got into a flirtation with a lady of the place. He was at once ordered off to sea, with sealed orders, which, on being opened, banished him to the West Indies. Yet with all this extravagance there were evidences of a good heart, or at least of good nature.

For what was called "bruising," the Prince of Wales early showed taste; but it was "recorded to his honour" that, having witnessed a dreadful prize-fight at Brighton, in the August of the following year, in which one of the "bruisers" was killed on the spot, he gave utterance to a sort of solemn vow that he would never witness another battle or again patronise the sport. This was no doubt prompted by a becoming feeling; but without the catastrophe the spectacle was brutal, and sufficiently inhuman.*

A little sketch of him, about this time, at an evening party, shows very effectively the favourable side of his character. Among his friends was Lady Clermont, a lady of the old school, who had brought to a party the well-known Count Fersen.†

"His Royal Highness took no notice of me on his first arrival; but, in a few minutes afterwards, coming up to me, 'Pray, Lady Clermont,' said he, 'is that man whom I see here Count Fersen, the Queen's favourite?' 'The gentleman,' answered I, 'to whom your Royal Highness alludes is Count Fersen; but so far from being a favourite of the Queen, he has not yet been presented at Court.' 'God d—n me!' exclaimed he, 'you don't imagine I mean my mother?' 'Sir,' I replied, 'whenever you are pleased to use the word "queen" without any addition I shall always understand it to mean *my* Queen. If you speak of any other queen I must entreat that you will be good enough to say the Queen of France, or of Spain.' The Prince made no reply; but, after having walked once or twice round Count Fersen, returning to me, 'He's certainly a very handsome fellow,' observed he. 'Shall I have the honour, sir,' said I, 'to present him to you?' He instantly turned on his heel, without giving me any answer; and I soon afterwards quitted Lady William Gordon's house, carrying Count Fersen with me. We drove to Mrs. St. John's, only a few doors distant, who had likewise a large party on that evening. When I had introduced him to various persons there I said to him: 'Count Fersen, I am an old woman, and infirm, who always go home to bed at eleven. You will, I hope, amuse yourself. Good-night.' Having thus done the honours, as well as I could, to a stranger who had been so highly recommended

* Mr. Windham was employed to get a palliative account inserted in his papers, being a great patron of the sport.

† Wraxall, "Posth. Memoirs."

to me, I withdrew into the ante-chamber, and sat down alone in a corner, waiting for my carriage. While there the Prince came in; and I naturally expected, after his recent behaviour, that he would rather avoid than accost me. On the contrary, advancing up to me, 'What are you doing here, Lady Clermont?' asked he. 'I am waiting for my coach, sir?' said I, 'in order to go home.' 'Then,' replied he, 'I will put you into it, and give you my arm down the stairs.' 'For heaven's sake, sir,' I exclaimed, 'don't attempt it; I am old, very lame, and my sight is imperfect. The consequence of your offering me your arm will be that, in my anxiety not to detain your Royal Highness, I shall hurry down and probably tumble from the top of the staircase to the foot.' 'Very likely,' answered he; 'but, if you tumble, I shall tumble with you. Be assured, however, that I will have the pleasure of assisting you, and placing you safely in your carriage.' I saw that he was determined to repair the rudeness with which he had treated me at Lady William Gordon's, and I therefore acquiesced. He remained with me till the coach was announced, conversed most agreeably on various topics, and as he took care of me down the stairs, enjoined me at every step not to hurry myself. Nor did he quit me when seated in the carriage, remaining uncovered on the steps of the house till it drove off from the door."

"The Prince," we are also told, "was one day so exceedingly urgent to have eight hundred pounds, at an hour on such a day, and in so unusual a manner, that the gentleman who furnished the supply had some curiosity to know for what purpose it was obtained. On inquiry he was informed that the moment the money arrived the Prince drew on a pair of boots, pulled off his coat and waistcoat, slipped on a plain morning frock, without a star, and, turning his hair to the crown of his head, put on a slouched hat, and thus walked out. This intelligence raised still greater curiosity, and with some trouble the gentleman discovered the object of the mysterious visit. An officer of the army had just arrived from America, with a wife and six children, in such low circumstances, that, to satisfy a clamorous creditor, he was on the point of selling his commission, to the utter ruin of his family. The Prince brought him the money himself to an obscure lodging-house."*

Yet, as moralists well know, such impulses, unless directed by principle, have little value, and become no more than new shapes of self-gratification. Presently we find him at Tunbridge Wells, where he much contributed to the gaiety of that place. Here, among other visitors, was Fitzgibbon, afterwards

* Huish, "Memoirs," i. 157.

the well-known Lord Clare, whose wife, "a smart lady," and one of "Buck" Whaley's family, attracted the notice of the impressionable Prince.

There was another watering-place which attracted him and engrossed much of his time, thought, and extravagance. The luxurious city of pleasure, the modern "London-on-the-Sea," unrivalled for its gaiety and enjoyment, is indebted to the young Prince of Wales for its earliest appreciation. Almost before he was of age he delighted in hurrying away from town for a brief snatch of seaside enjoyment. We are told a new and fantastic equipage, consisting of a phaeton drawn only by three horses, one before the other, on the first of which rode a postilion, was designed to enable him to reach his favourite haunt with more expedition. With all his fickleness he was through his life constant to this fancy, and, like the Grand Monarque, paid it the homage of adorning it with the quaint and costly palace which still rears its outlandish pinnacles.*

This fancy had taken root after the time when he first visited the Duke of Cumberland, in 1782, who then occupied a small old-fashioned house on the very edge of the sea, known as Grove House, belonging to a Mr. Wyndham. This stood almost solitary, some sandy downs spreading away near it, a curious contrast to the vast crowds of houses which now line the shore.† In the following year he paid a second visit, on this occasion occupying Mr. Kemp's house, or rather cottage, which was close by. This, or some addition, was built by Weltjie, his cook, and was separated from the high road by some shrubs and rose trees. Owing to the bad state of his health, and the agitation

* In an old posting-book now before me, once belonging to a friend of Mr. Sterne's, in which are set down several notes useful on travel, furnished by that gentleman, as "Mr. Sterne recommended Mr. Ray of Montpellier as a most worthy English banker,"—there is a MS. sketch of the place so early as 1767. "Until within a few years it was no better than a mere fishing town inhabited by fishermen and sailors, but through the recommendation of Dr. Russel, and by the means of his writing in favour of sea-water, it is become one of the principal places in the kingdom for the resort of the idle and dissipated as well as of the diseased and infirm. There are two assembly-rooms which are opened on different nights, one kept by Mr. Shergold, who keeps the sign of King Charles's Head, and lives in the very house wherein he was concealed; and the other assembly-room is kept by Mr. Hicks, who keeps the coffee-house. The place on which the company usually walk in the evening is a large field near the sea, called the Stean, which is kept in proper order for that purpose, and whereon are several shops, with piazzas and benches therein erected, and a building for music to perform in when the weather will permit."

† A view of this old mansion, as it appeared at this date, is given in "The European Magazine."

produced by the events of 1783, he was ordered sea-bathing by the physicians. And the excuse of seeking health being thus added to the other attractions of the place, he pursued his hobby with the ardour so often found in persons of his disposition. Thus, we learn, he would set off from London, and return the same day, making the drive there and back in ten hours. The next step was to build, and from thenceforth for many years he was engrossed with the costly folly of constructing a country as well as a town palace at the same time—a mania that brought him down to the level of an impoverished spend-thrift, and involved him in the most humiliating shifts. Holland, the architect of Carlton House, furnished plans, and in 1787, the first rough sketch, as it may be called, of the Brighton Folly was completed; for, like Carlton House, it was to be altered and reshaped several times, a characteristic of the self-indulgent, who build not to have a house, but for the pleasure of building. It then was a plain substantial structure, low, flanked by two wings, with a large rotunda in the middle, the favourite form in those days of the nobleman's house. One wing, however, was the shell of the old house. For the decorations an emissary was despatched to Italy, to study and bring back suitable designs.* But he was not content with so homely an edifice, and Nash, the fashionable architect, was called in to reconstruct the whole in the fantastic form which it now exhibits. Additional land was bought, and for more than twenty years the chopping and changing, and rebuilding went on.

Just as there was then a sort of spurious Gothic, which seemed to be evolved from the brain of the scene-painter; so the pavilion affected a sort of Eastern architecture, which might be Chinese or Turkish, or Hindoo, the vague and cloudy term "Eastern," being used to cover the assemblage of contradictory and inharmonious elements. The fashionable architect, we are told, worked under "the direct surveillance" of the royal virtuoso, whose "facility of invention and taste" was the soul of the whole. How this taste was inspired may be gathered from the following fact: He received a present of some beautiful Chinese papers, which he was embarrassed how to dispose of. The idea of a Chinese gallery to exhibit the paper suggested itself, and was carried out. This again suggested a sort of transparent chamber in the middle, formed of glass painted with Chinese patterns, and illuminated from behind, so that the guest was delighted, and perhaps provoked, at finding himself in a sort of lantern. These sort of surprises were then considered in the

* This agent was said to have been a common bricklayer, and his expenses were charged at two thousand pounds.

best taste. The apartments were certainly laid out on a splendid and spacious scale; and the noble music-room, banqueting-room, blue and yellow drawing-rooms, offered fine proportions, though certainly disfigured by the Chinese monsters and "gilt trellis work in imitation of Bamboo," which was all in execrable taste. Yet there were admirable models, and architects of the Adam school, who could have designed a building that would have been effective and in good taste; but it was characteristic that our Prince should have assumed that he could not effectively display his gifts out in the style that was accepted by the nation, but only in some extravagant and unfamiliar fashion. There, however, it stands to this day—the Brighton Pavilion—decayed and cumbering valuable earth, an eccentric gathering of pinnacles, without the quaintness of antiquity, and having something of the effect of the tawdry decorations of a ball, seen on the morning after. Unhappily, it was now to be associated with scenes of revel and riot, and the Pavilion must always rise to the memory when we think of the merry days of the Regency, or the hot youth of George, Prince of Wales.

Arriving at Brighton from Tunbridge he brought with him the usual carnival. Wonderful was the change that had taken place within the two or three years since he had "taken up" the place. The effect of patronage on such places as Homburg and Brighton is like magic. Already it was overflowing with company. Doctors had established themselves; and Pepys, the eminent physician, also found it desirable to follow his fashionable patients thither during the season. There was even a playhouse. Unfortunately the example of the august patron had also the effect of drawing there the most indiscriminate collection of persons, for we are told "that, authorised by the royal example, everybody thought himself at liberty to do as the Prince himself did," and the spectacle of a crowded night at the theatre was not an edifying one. Lord Brudenell, keeper of the King's privy purse, flung himself into the riot with more zeal than discretion, acquiring the nickname of "Cockie" to the great amusement, it was said, of his Majesty.*

But in all this frivolity and gaiety he did not suspect that a crisis of the most important and momentous kind was at hand. Here it was that an express reached him with alarming news of his father's illness. He posted at once to Windsor, and the fashionable watering-place, as though everyone was seized with a panic, became deserted almost on the instant.

* Auckland, ii. 235.

CHAPTER XII.

1788.

IN the last weeks of October some strange rumours as to the state of the King's health were current at the two great clubs, though the common crowd knew no more than that the King was indisposed. His physician, Sir George Baker, who had seen him on the evening of October 22nd, had suspected that his mind was disordered, while his strange behaviour at the *levée* had excited the worst forebodings of the ministers. Not, however, until November 4th could the malady be said to have revealed itself, and for nearly a fortnight the suffering King had been allowed to encounter exciting duties of all kinds, to ride hard, four hours at a time in the rain, to go to town and hold his *levée*, all the time suffering from agitation and fever.

Miss Burney describes minutely the painful scenes at the palace during this early stage: the queen and her daughters sitting up all night "in an agony of weeping:" the unhappy King promenading restlessly hither and thither, not so disordered as to warrant restraint or interference: pouring out a stream of ceaseless talk, until he became almost inaudible from hoarseness. The spectacle of his friends and attendants, whom he encountered in every passage and anteroom, whispering together, following him, while affecting to hide from him, must have had the worst effect; to say nothing of the Queen's "ghastly face" and perpetual floods of tears, and the scared manner of her ladies.

The Prince announced that he intended returning to Brighton

the next day; but the events of that night were to change all his plans, for when that dismal family party were seated at dinner, the King flew at his son—who had caused him such sorrows—in a paroxysm, seizing him by the collar and pushing him with violence against the wall. He would know did he dare to prevent the King of England speaking out. The Queen fell off into hysterics; and the Prince, dreadfully agitated, began to cry. In a situation of the kind his nerves seemed always to fail him. He was, indeed, so upset, as it is called, that he had to be bled next day.* This want of firmness was only what was to be expected in one whose life was so devoted to pleasure.†

The forms of these early paroxysms show what was preying on the King's heart, and reveal the causes of his madness—the loss of his American colonies, and his son's unfilial behaviour and irregularities.

During this agitating night no one in the castle went to bed. Miss Burney, wandering about the galleries, accidentally opened a door and found herself in a room filled with gentlemen, sitting round in awful silence, among whom were the two Princes. This was the ante-room, while the poor King, now quite mad, was babbling away within, unconscious that such a crowd was near him. Later on he suddenly opened the door and stood bewildered at seeing so many faces, but was scarcely more bewildered than were the others. Even then he showed his instinctive dislike of his eldest son, for he exclaimed piteously, on recognising the Duke of York, "Yes, Frederick is my friend." No one had courage or presence of mind to take any steps. The Prince of Wales shrank back; the physician, Baker, whose duty it was to have controlled him, lost courage; until Colonel Digby went up to him boldly, and awing him with some judicious words, got him back to bed.

The Prince, instead of returning to his pleasures at Brighton the morning after his visit, now found himself the central figure to whom all eyes were turned. The King was not expected to live; the Queen, utterly crushed by the blow, was falling from one fit of hysterics into another. The future ruler took the whole direction of the castle into his own hands. In every difficulty the people came to him for direction. As numbers of idle persons found their way to the castle to gossip with the various officials, he prudently issued strict orders that, save four persons,

* Buck. Pap. i. 437.

† The King did not call his son an old woman, as Lord Stanhope says ("Life of Pitt"); that speech was really addressed to his physician.

whom he named, no one should be admitted. He himself presided at the equerries' table.*

In London it was believed that the King's illness was of a fatal kind; and even before November 5th (the day of the first outbreak of the insanity) there was "a general alarm" abroad. An anxious placeman at Whitehall, Mr. W. Grenville, was quick to discern the exultation of his opponents, who, he said, did not disguise their anticipations that the blow would happen in a few days. This was to be the tone of the Tories in the bitter struggle that followed; Fox and his friends being usually described as a band of unscrupulous men who wished, not to oust a ministry, but to "seize on the Government" and "overthrow the Constitution." On the evening of the 6th, an express had reached Pitt with news of the scene at the dinner-table. All seemed to herald his own fall, and even ruin. He waited in hourly expectation of a messenger from Windsor with news of the King's death. The Chancellor was already on the spot, and came up the following morning with directions for Pitt to go down and see the Prince. Mr. Grenville fondly imagined that this message looked like negotiation.

Things began to look yet more gloomy when it was found that Thurlow would not be disinclined to serve a new king in the same capacity. Nor was there anything extraordinary or unnatural in such an idea; for it was known that he cordially disliked Pitt, and that his devotion was more for the Sovereign than for the party. He belonged to "the King's friends."

An accurate and well-informed observer seems to have kept a sort of diary of these melancholy proceedings, and from their record I quote what follows :† "In the violent paroxysms of his Majesty's disorder, he continually raved about the Queen; sometimes loading her with reproaches, and uttering threats against

* One of these troublesome persons was his old tutor Smelt, who, much affected at the condition of the King, was insisting with much importunity that he should be allowed to attend on him as his page. The Prince received him good-naturedly, and told him that he had better stay and see the Queen; on which the tutor was hurriedly setting off to fetch Mrs. Smelt and secure apartments for her at the inn. The Prince, who purposely changed his mind, had so much to think of that he forgot his instructions to the gate-keepers, and Mr. Smelt was denied admittance at the gate, and went away shocked and overwhelmed. A few weeks later, at Kew, the Prince apologised to him in his own gracious manner; having, as Miss Burney says, "the faculty of making his peace with captivating grace."

† These "particulars" are singularly interesting, and are given in an obscure Life of George the Third. They seemed to have escaped the notice of Mr. Jesse and other writers: but I have not been able to trace the author.

her ; at others desiring her presence, with expressions of passionate regard. One day, tired of vainly soliciting to see the Queen, his Majesty desired to have her picture. He addressed it with great calmness and recollection in these words : ' We have been married twenty-eight years, and never have we been separated a day till now ; and now you abandon me in my misfortunes.' Another day, his Majesty desired to have four hundred pounds from his privy purse. He divided it into different sums, wrapping them up in separate papers, upon which he wrote the names of persons to whom he had been accustomed to make monthly payments, with perfect accuracy and precision. His Majesty then wrote down the different sums, with the names annexed, cast up the whole, as he formerly used to do, and ordered the money to be paid immediately, it being then due. After this instance of perfect recollection, his Majesty began to deplore the unhappy situation of London ; which, he said, had been under water a fortnight. He then proceeded to explain, with the same composure, that the water was making gradual advances ; and that, in one week more, it would reach the Queen's House. His Majesty expressed great unwillingness that a valuable manuscript, the precise situation of which he described, should suffer ; and declared an intention of going, on the ensuing Monday, to rescue it from the approaching evil. This mixture of distraction and reason giving way to absolute alienation, his Majesty expressed his sorrow that Lord T—— was not present, he having prepared everything for creating him a Duke."

The behaviour of the Chancellor, from the very beginning, excited the suspicion of his companions in the ministry. It must be said, however, that he seemed careless what they thought, and pursued his course. The "memoranda" of the Duke of Leeds give the fullest account of this episode. On the visit of ministers to Windsor the Prince did not see them, but he was closeted with the Chancellor both in the morning and in the evening ; and Mr. Pitt learned that on the same evening Fox had been with the Chancellor. They were not slow to let him feel that they suspected him ; for a week or two later when the whole Cabinet were dining with Lord Stafford, this incident took place. The host, "with much emotion," told them that the King had been struck by one of his pages, adding that the King had not only been shamefully treated but had been betrayed. The Chancellor, thus glanced at, said that if anything of the kind had occurred, the person in question ought not to be "suffered about his person ; but he knew that, in a paroxysm, the King had hurt one of the pages extremely." Lord Stafford replied significantly that "it was not the page he alluded to when he said the

King had been betrayed." The Chancellor, however, could actually bring himself to assure his colleagues that, "in the several conversations with the Prince there never had been anything of a political or ministerial nature introduced." A statement difficult to accept.*

In the first agitation the Prince was, as it were, bewildered, and knew not whom to turn to. Fox, his adviser and counsellor, in despair at any change in his political fortunes, had left England for a tour, hopeless as to the condition of his party. The situation was of extraordinary difficulty and delicacy, and there was but one person of sufficient sagacity and resolution to whom he could turn for advice. This was Lord Loughborough, the Chief Justice, who had come an adventurer from Scotland, and yet who, though enjoying a splendid office, was eager to adventure yet more. On the 6th November the Duke of York was despatched to him, with an assurance that everything should be told to him, and that to him alone should the Prince look for advice. But, with characteristic oddity, the Prince determined that this communication should be secret and mysterious.

There was now at Windsor, with the Prince, one of his favourite familiars, a navy officer, known to Sheridan and others as "Jack Payne." This not very brilliant adviser, with wits confused by two nights' vigils, was the last person that should have been cast for the delicate part of a negotiator, yet fancied he was of sufficient calibre to direct the negotiation. Accordingly, on the 7th, Lord Loughborough received from him a letter that began thus solemnly: "In situations of difficulty and moment one generally looks to their friends, who, from presuming most willing, we know also are most able to give advice. Knowing the friendship and good opinion the best of friends entertain for you coincides so much with my own, I venture to say to you that, at a time when he sees nobody, that if anything that can suggest itself that can be of use, I shall be happy to be made a vehicle of it to his advantage." The letter goes on mysteriously: "The Prince talked to me of rejecting a rule where somebody was not united to him. I told him he would be advised to the contrary by his best friends, on the truest principles of public good. If any important accident should happen, I need not say to you," concludes Jack Payne, "I beg I may not be understood to have had any communication

* Mr. Jesse is inclined to discredit the truth of this singularly painful story; but it was repeated afterwards by the King himself, when restored to reason, not only to Lady Harcourt, but to Lord Eldon. To the lady's husband the King also complained of much cruel treatment.

with you, as I have no authority for doing so, and therefore you need not acknowledge any such. Seeing the Prince so much as I do, I am anxious to have the best opinions."

What this "rejecting a rule" pointed to, is not very clear, but it most likely refers to the Duke of Portland, or to Thurlow, who was in attendance, and whom the Prince received with the marks of the highest consideration, saying: "I have desired your lordship's attendance, not only as my father's friend, but as my own friend; and I beseech you, my lord, to give me your counsel on this unhappy occasion. I have the utmost confidence in your judgment, and shall have the utmost satisfaction in acting by it."

The King's death was supposed to be only a question of a few hours. As Mr. Payne wrote in the same letter, with ill-dissembled elation, "his state is so bad, that I fear dissolution is almost the best that can be hoped. The *last* stroke, as I hear from the *best*" (underlined) "authority, cannot be far off. It is what everybody, in a situation to see, is obliged to wish, as *the happiest possible termination to the melancholy scene*. The event we looked for last night is *postponed*, perhaps for a short time."

Thus, it is clear that the Prince was revelling in the *tracasseries* which he considered to be diplomacy. The Chief Justice continued to receive much encouragement: "Tell Lord Loughborough" (Mr. Payne wrote in the name of the Prince) "I am persuaded no less of his attachment than I desire him to be of mine, and shall always receive his advice with the same great degree of pleasure as I do upon this occasion, and without which I shall not act for any material decision of my present delicate situation." And again: "*Certain people*, not quite convinced a reform takes place, and all active communication where you are may be well accounted for, without a certain person, who sees nobody, be supposed to be informed. The person I allude to said to me last night: 'I hope Lords L. and S. are in close communication together on this occasion.'" In explanation of this mystery and confused English, it seems that the Prince did not wish to commit himself to any party, save the one which would give him most power. It is wonderful that Loughborough, an old *rusé* practitioner, could have allowed himself to be played with, or "bamboozled" by such stuff as the following: "Before any decided measure is decided on, it is necessary, I think, you should see the Prince, and, he says, as soon as he has seen S—— he will contrive it; but he is extremely jealous of seeing more than one person at a time, and that not by way of *consultation*, but in private friendship. He said to-night he thought it had better be done by your coming to your farm and then to Bagshot; but more of this

hereafter."* In reply, the Chief Justice developed his plans in a long despatch: "I have not the least apprehension," he wrote, "of any mischief that can arise to H.R.H. but from his own virtues." He advised "not dissimulation, but a certain reserve and guard upon the frankness of that amiable disposition which is the ornament and delight of society."

But, actually as he was writing, the airy house of cards was toppling. The King, who at midnight "was in a situation he could not long have survived," was suddenly relieved by some strong remedies, fell into a profound sleep, and awoke to be pronounced out of danger. This was indeed provoking, and it rendered necessary a total revision of their plans.

There remained one satisfaction. The mental affliction promised to be permanent. He had "all the gestures and ravings of the most confirmed lunatic," and the doctors agreed "that to the disease they at present see no end in their contemplation." "These are their own words," writes Captain Payne eagerly, "which is all there can be implied in an absolute declaration, for infallibility cannot be ascribed to them."

The idea of the King's dying was therefore dismissed. The little plotters at the castle had to deal with a new state of things. The next letter of the sanguine Payne is written to Sheridan, and is almost entirely taken up with consolatory assurances of the hopeless state of the King's wits. "Dr. Warren," he said, "was the living principle of this business (for poor Baker is half-crazed himself), and who I see every half-hour." He was the doctor in the Prince's interest. With a view of checking the malignancy of their political foes, who would do their best to excite public suspicion, "The various fluctuations of his (the King's) ravings" were accurately written down throughout the night, "and this we have got signed by the physicians every day." Thus was intrigue made to override all considerations of feeling; and it was scarcely surprising if Lord Bulkeley heard that "the two sons of the Queen, I am afraid, do not announce the state of his health to her with caution and delicacy."

The prospect was now not nearly so brilliant. A regency, instead of sovereignty, was to follow as a matter of course; and though there had been some whispers that "certain persons" might attempt to impose restraints on that power nothing certain had transpired, for at this time Mr. Pitt had not made up his mind what course to take.

The Prince had another agent at work—his henchman, the shift and vivacious Sheridan, who was now in London. With

* Campbell, "Lives of the Chancellors," vi. 192.

his affected monopoly of the Prince's confidences, and "his eagerness to display his own importance," he had, as Mr. Grenville heard, quite disgusted the Duke of Portland and the more sober and dignified members of the party. Indeed, those concerned in the regency struggle of twenty years later, might have found a clue to the perplexing questions then raised in the fact that the control of the situation fell naturally to the Prince's henchmen and personal friends; and the Greys and other respectable Whigs might have learned from the proceedings of 1789 that their influence would be but of small account.

It would seem that the various plotters were carrying on distinct intrigues, each opposed to the other. Payne and his Prince, while affecting to communicate with the Chief Justice, and enjoining secrecy on him, were themselves secretly negotiating with Thurlow; while with the Duke of Portland and the official leaders there seems to have been little or no communication.

Sheridan, finding the threads of the intrigue becoming entangled, complained almost despairingly to his coadjutor, the Chief Justice: "It is really intolerable," he wrote, "and I mean to speak plainly to him." The Prince was sending up Payne to town on that day, and Sheridan was to try and set the meddling equerry's "head to rights, if possible, for he was growing worse and worse." He was inclined to think, however, that a few words from Loughborough would have more weight. It was reported that a strange sort of council had been held at Bagshot, to which came secretly the Prince, Sheridan, Mrs. Fitzherbert, and the indispensable Jack Payne; and that Master Barry, Lord Barrymore's hopeful brother, with some Eton lads, had been called into council at Carlton House. The Duke of Portland and the more respectable Whigs might have learned the significant lesson that there was nothing in common between them and the other wing; and that, Fox absent or Fox dead, there was to be no sympathy for them in the Prince's mind and no place in his councils. This also should be borne in mind when the question of "the treatment of the Whigs" comes to be considered.

We must now turn our eyes to the opposite camp, where there was hardly less anxiety. The leader himself did not at once take up this later attitude of adherence to his afflicted king, but seems to have been willing to take service with the new administration. For nearly a fortnight he attempted, in his numerous visits to Windsor, to discover what the Prince's intentions were, and it was only when he found, beyond a doubt, that "we were all to be turned out," that he took up a bolder attitude.

When the crisis of the King's disorder was past, the unpleasant truth began to dawn on the party that they would be all

dismissed. We find Mr. Grenville ruefully observing that there was "no knowledge of the Prince's intentions, as no overture, either direct or indirect, had been made to Pitt." This, with the eagerness with which Sheridan was consulted on all occasions, was "an index of what was to be expected." Under this view, it is amusing to find how the whole plan of hostile restrictions is developed. They would enforce that there should be a ruler, or "guardian," but he was to exercise authority "in the King's name." It was determined that there should be a Regent, but he was to be invested with only a portion of the royal prerogatives, to be checked by a Council, and not to have the power of dissolving Parliament. They were surely bound, thought Mr. Grenville, by every tie of gratitude and honour, and, indeed, as public men, to preserve all his rights for the afflicted King. This system of offence was only resolved upon when it was found that after nearly ten days the Prince persisted in his reserve. The Prime Minister had now therefore decided on his course of action. There were many encouraging circumstances. On a visit which he himself had paid to Windsor on the 14th, he found that even Reynolds and Baker had begun to talk with some hope of the King's recovery. There was a general impression, indeed, that the royal patient was getting better, and the friends of the administration were giving this out industriously. The opinion of Hunter, the great surgeon, that "recovery was certain," was also circulated. The flattering offer from the City merchants of a large present of money, with addresses that the present Government might be continued, were satisfactory proofs of the feeling of the country, though Lord Sheffield heard that this element of support was to be "artfully worked up by the Government into a sort of agitation." Arrived at this conclusion, Pitt now developed his plan, which was conceived in a spirit of just but stern hostility. The Prince was not to look for the slightest indulgence, but was to be dealt with as the chief of a faction. There can be little doubt that the idea of a controlling council was intended, which would have made the Prince's position much about what a Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland is now. This could not have been a secret, as Mr. Jesse thinks, for it was known to his party, as well as to the Opposition. Mr. Storer heard that it was intended to saddle the Prince with a council, while the Duke of Richmond was quoted for a plan of the same kind. Even a jest was in circulation, that it was resolved to put the strait-waistcoat on the Prince of Wales instead of on the King.

When this became known, and it was felt it would be carried out, the plotters and intriguers about the Prince had the incredible

folly to enter upon a new course, as stupid as it was unconstitutional. They deluded themselves that a sort of *coup d'état* might be attempted without difficulty. They had but to declare the "divine right" of the Prince to take on him the government, unconscious that there was a great question involved: though Payne allowed that some "form" might be tolerated on the side of Parliament, in asking the Prince to take on him the government. From this dream they were destined to be rudely awakened. This original blunder vitiated all their plans and destroyed the game.

More surprising was it that the vigorous Loughborough should have been daring enough to suggest that the Prince should declare his right to rule the kingdom, and put aside, as an affront to his dignity, the interference of Parliament. On the first symptoms of the King's recovery he had prepared the plan. A pencilled note, found among his papers, sets out the details of the scheme. The Privy Council was to be summoned to whom the Prince was to announce it formally, notice was previously to be sent to trusted friends or conspirators, and a proclamation was to be then issued summoning Parliament. That Lord Loughborough had written a letter containing such advice later became known to Pitt. There have been, of course, many supporters of this divine-right theory, which, to the majority of minds, would have been expected to have been a high Tory doctrine; but this shows how pliant is political conscience, according to times and persons. This gives an idea of the strange, agitated, and desperate tone of the politics of the times, which was verging near to the modern French system. Lord Campbell learned, he does not say from whom, that this programme was read by the Chief Justice himself to the Prince at Windsor, or, more probably, in his secret council at Bagshot:

"Upon the supposition of a state of disorder without prospect of recovery or of a speedy extinction, the principle of the P.'s conduct is perfectly clear. The administration of government devolves to him of right. He is bound by every duty to assume it, and his character would be lessened in the public estimation if he took it on any other ground but right, or on any sort of compromise. The authority of Parliament as the great council of the nation, would be interposed, not to confer but to declare the right. The mode of proceeding which occurs to my mind is, that in a very short time H.R.H. should signify his intention to act by directing a meeting of the Privy Council, where he should declare his intention to take upon himself the care of the State, and should at the same time signify his desire to have the advice of Parliament, and order it by a proclamation to meet early for

despatch of business. That done, he should direct the several ministers to attend him with the public business of their offices.

"It is of vast importance in the outset that he should appear to act entirely of himself, and in the conferences he must necessarily have, not to consult, but to listen and direct.

"Though the measure of assembling the Council should not be consulted upon, but decided in his own breast, it ought to be communicated to a few persons who may be trusted, a short time before it takes place; and it will deserve consideration whether it might or not be expedient very speedily after this measure, in order to mark distinctly the assumption of government, to direct such persons—at least in one or two instances—to be added to what is called the Cabinet, as he thinks proper. By marking a determination to act of himself, and by cautiously avoiding to raise strong fear or strong hope, but keeping men's minds in expectation of what may arise out of his reserve, and in a persuasion of his general candour, he will find all men equally observant of him."

This memorandum is unsigned, but in the Chief Justice's handwriting; and, taking what occurred as evidence for committing the Chief Justice to the Tower, might have been sufficient. It was characteristic of the bold Scot, who flung off his gown in open court, in presence of the astonished judges, and took his way to London penniless.

The self-sufficient Payne airily dismissed the notion of there being any difficulty in the way. He now wrote to Sheridan quite elated: "I can only add," he says, in conclusion, "I have none of the apprehensions contained in Lord L.'s letter. I have had correspondence enough myself on this subject to convince me of the impossibility of the ministry managing the present Parliament by any contrivance hostile to the Prince. Dinner is on the table." A few days before he had written sagaciously that if "Pitt stirs much, I think any attempt to grasp at power might be fatal to his interests—at least, will turn against it." This was indeed a shallow forecast.

It was at this time that party spirit began openly to divide the battalion of doctors who were in charge of the King, and which was already ranged as the King's or Prince's men. Already Warren was considered by Jack Payne and his friends as "the living principle in this business," while "poor Baker," because he was more sanguine as to the King's recovery, was held to be "half-crazed himself." On the other hand the Tory view was that "nothing could exceed Warren's indiscretion in giving out that the disorder was incurable." No less than seven or eight physicians were called in to take charge of the unfortunate monarch.

They were Dr. Warren, Sir Lucas Pepys, Sir George Baker, Addington, Heberden, and finally the two Willises. Warren was a fashionable doctor, remarkable for "the amenity of his manners, and the cheerful tone of his conversation." He had cured Lord North of a dangerous illness, and the minister, full of gratitude, had offered to make him a baronet. This, however, he had declined, but requested instead a bishopric for his brother, which was given. The Prince was very partial to his society, and it was not unnatural that his *protégé* should have little hopes of the King's recovery.

Baker seemed to have been a person of feeble cast, and was presently dismissed with some disgrace. Addington had, oddly enough, a clergyman's experience in the treatment of lunacy, and was more remarkable as having supplied the nickname of "The Doctor" for his son, the future Prime Minister.* Pepys was another of the fashionable physicians; while Heberden will ever be remembered as the affectionate friend and adviser of the revered Johnson. The discord and partiality of this Æsculapian band became a scandal. Their ignorance of mental disease was profound, and partisanship supplied the deficiency. The struggle, however, was soon confined to the two who had most ability—Warren and Willis. By-and-by the daily bulletin came to be considered as a mere form, the public having found out that the opposing doctors could not or would not agree, except in some colourless report; and the only official news that was relied on came by the back-stairs, or private letters from the Court.

* The more immediate occasion of this sobriquet was the minister's having suggested "a pillow of hops" to the King as a remedy for sleeplessness.

CHAPTER XIII.

1788.

THE meeting of Parliament was fixed for November 20th, and both ministers and Opposition had issued the most pressing letters, desiring the attendance of their friends. The roads were crowded with members, hurrying from all parts of the kingdom, desirous of witnessing what Sir N. Wraxall calls "so new and so interesting a situation of affairs." The same diligent observer had posted from Bath, scenting intrigue from afar, and found London exhibiting a scene of fermentation difficult to conceive or describe. But when the Houses met everyone felt that the proceedings must be purely formal. Neither party were ready for battle, and the Opposition were without a leader. Pitt, after alluding in terms of becoming concern to the King's malady—a malady that prevented his servants from approaching his person or communicating with him, simply moved that they should adjourn for a fortnight.

But a new performer was now to enter on the scene, and displace the fussy persons who were confusing the situation; and a more capable mind was to take the command. Fox, it was believed and hoped, was fast hurrying to England. Messenger after messenger, it was said, had been despatched by the Prince in pursuit of him, though no one could tell precisely where he was to be found. The task, however, had been entrusted to one resolute and persevering messenger, who had followed in his track like a hound, now losing, now picking up the trail. Not a moment had been lost in sending him away. He had been despatched on the sixth day after the distressing scene at dinner when the King's malady first broke out. He was detained, however,

at Dover by contrary winds till the 8th. Without losing an hour he traced Fox to Geneva, where he was for a time uncertain what route "the chase" had taken, and finally came up with him at Bologna, covering the long journey from Paris in a week. Fox, who was attended by the notorious Mrs. Armistead, had laid out for himself a delightful Italian tour, and, turning with disgust from politics, had purposely left no traces of his progress. He wished, as his friend Elliot said, to be lost. Though he had been absent since August, he never looked at a newspaper save once, and that from curiosity to see what had won a race at Newmarket. Since September he had not received a letter from England, and knew nothing of what was going on. No doubt he assumed that the prospects of his party were hopeless, and that the record of perpetual defeat must be uninteresting. One day, at Bologna, he heard from a stray traveller that a messenger had been searching for him at Geneva; and Fox, having heard from another tourist that Lord Holland was very ill, naturally concluded that news of his father's death was on its way to him. When the messenger at last reached him, his affectionate anxiety was so relieved that he fell upon a sofa and burst into tears. He started at once, and the trusty messenger, still unwearied after his long journey, set off the same day on his return, ordering horses in advance all along the road for the greater traveller following, who hurried on, travelling night and day. On Mont Cenis, his carriage crossed that of Pulteney, father of the great heiress of the day, and to whom he communicated the news. At Lyons, he found letters still more pressing, with the additional news of the King's total loss of reason; then, for greater speed, he quitted his companion and proceeded alone, taking one of the ordinary post-carriages instead of his own well-appointed chariot.

Finally, he drove up to Thomas's Hotel, in Berkeley Square, which still flourishes, arriving on the morning of Monday, November 24th, having been just nine days on the road. This was considered an amazing feat; and such it certainly was, under the conditions of travel in those times. But the immense exertion, and the rudeness of the chaise for which he had exchanged his own, told on his bulky person accustomed to ease, and when he was set down in London he was already an altered man.

This might be considered like the presence of Napoleon with an army. He was only just in time. His coming made an important change in the conduct of affairs. Almost as soon as he arrived he wrote to Loughborough, begging him to come to him

to arrange some plan of action; but that he had not seen or heard from the Prince and had no authority.*

Meanwhile, the negotiations with the Chancellor had proceeded very far. It was contrived that he should have a kind of right of inspection of the King; which gave him opportunities, as the Prince's party fancied, for arranging with them, but, as he intended it, for judging day by day whether the King would recover. They had determined that "no active courtship was to be practised."

Lord Loughborough—who had himself set his mind on the chancellorship—was pressed to resign his pretensions, the Prince saying lightly: "Well, if the Chancellor chooses to remain where he is, Lord Loughborough can have the privy seal of the President of the Council for the present, and settle the other arrangement afterwards, if it is more to his mind." We shall see that this partiality was a whim of the Prince's, which his followers too obsequiously favoured. Sir William Young writes that "this wonderful attachment to Thurlow" was the matter of public remark; and Sir Gilbert Elliot suggested that the liking was for "the sake of his table qualities," and that he had been "negotiating, and intriguing, and canvassing him incessantly, with little discretion; and, in spite of many disappointments and breaches of engagements, still persisted in sending for him." With this courtship—not from members of the party, but from the future king—it was difficult for such a character to take a firm part, and he is, therefore, entitled to some indulgence. We shall presently see how and what he finally determined.

There can be no doubt, too, that the Chancellor had announced to the Prince that, in any case, his views as to his (the Prince's) rights were opposed to Pitt's. And this should be kept in mind during the curious and much-debated intrigue which is to follow.

The Prince was all this time imprisoned at Windsor, and obliged for decency's sake to forego his usual round of pleasures. It was noted that he fretted against this confinement, which had now lasted nearly a month. Occasionally he made his escape to Bagshot or to Carlton House, and when the King had been removed to Kew, on November 29th, he found himself within half-an-hour's drive from the capital and the favourite scene of his enjoyments. Stories were circulated of the want of feeling and rashness displayed by the two brothers, but as these were industriously spread by those of the opposing faction, and

* Lord Campbell is surely mistaken in declaring that Fox offered him the chancellorship, and that Loughborough "clutched at the seal."

who were virtually his enemies, they may be assumed to be much exaggerated. One charge dwelt on with horror was that he had introduced Lord Lothian into the King's darkened room in order that he might hear his ravings, a proceeding not perhaps to be justified on the score of good taste, but intelligible when it is considered that it was insinuated that the Prince was making out the King's condition worse than it really was. The nature of the struggle between the two contending factions made all delicacy impossible. His situation was the most awkward conceivable: credited with the worst motives by his mother and his sisters, watched with jealousy, looked on as an intruder and as his father's worst enemy, he was driven, as it were, into a hostile attitude. Mr. Jesse deals severely with the behaviour of the two princes, but with a certain exaggeration. For the instances of unfeeling conduct are presented as occurring during the horrors of the first stage of the King's seizure, whereas they really belong to a period many weeks later, when the worst was over and his recovery certain. On the other hand, men of his own party represent his conduct during the crisis as having been all that was correct. "It was universally agreed," Storer wrote, "that he had conducted himself with great propriety." Lord Sheffield declared that he gained great credit by his conduct at Windsor. "It is agreed on all sides," wrote Storer a fortnight after his first letter, "that the Prince has acted with the greatest attention to the King, and in all respects with the greatest propriety," while Sir Gilbert Elliot wrote to his wife that both the Prince and his brother had conducted themselves "in an exemplary way." Making due allowance for their partialities, this testimony may be fairly accepted, especially as there is nothing to set against it on the other side.

But now Fox had assumed the command, and a larger and less frivolous view of the situation was to be taken. He saw the Prince on the Wednesday, and suggested that the regular leaders of the party should be, as was only fitting, called into council. The Prince had quarrelled with Fox's devoted friend the Duke of Portland, and during the present crisis had had no communication with him. This advice had the best effect. In consequence, the Prince gave Fox a message for the duke. Taking him by the hand he said: "Pray shake the Duke of Portland by the hand for me, and tell him that I hope everything that is past may be forgot between us; and, as a proof that I retain no impression from it, assure him that as soon as I come to town, which will be in a day or two, I shall come to Burlington House, and I do not desire that my going there should be kept private." "This looks more like heart, and is done more like a gentleman

than one looks for from any other prince we have known in England," said Elliot. The duke was properly touched, and with the help of Windham and Sir G. Elliot wrote a reply. When they met, the Prince greeted him warmly and embraced him, begging that every unpleasant circumstance that had passed between them might be buried in oblivion, and assuring him that he should be happy to receive his aid and counsels. The Prince then begged to have the advice of the party who were in the Cabinet in 1783.

Fox seems to have entered reluctantly into the plan for gaining the Chancellor, who had been allowed access to the King in the hope that the spectacle would have due effect. Captain Payne was to set off for town immediately after to report the result to Sheridan and Fox at the latter's house. One of the physicians was despatched to Pitt with the view of announcing a welcome relapse, and with the rather spiteful purpose of letting him know that the King had been letting out some state secrets, and brought word that the minister was much taken aback. These small intriguers did not know that this news had only confirmed Pitt in his plans, for that night at White's it was remarked that he was in the highest spirits. The attempt on the Chancellor does not seem to have been very successful. Lord Bulkeley, an enthusiastic Tory, wrote that very day that he had "heard for certain that he was now firm as a rock."

On the Wednesday night, or rather during the small hours of Thursday morning, a messenger came to Pitt's house with summonses for a Cabinet meeting at Windsor in the afternoon. The servant who opened the door, after inquiring as to the reason of this unreasonable visit, asked if he had found the Chancellor, and was answered "Yes," and that "Mr. Fox was with him." This seems to have been the first time that Pitt had any direct evidence of the intrigue that was going on; and that the chief of the hostile force should be closeted at midnight with his Chancellor had certainly a suspicious air. But however suspicious the transaction may have appeared, the truth was Fox had as yet made him no offers.

The Duke of Leeds—then Lord Carmarthen, and one of the ministry—describes a curious message to the Cabinet from the Prince, delivered on this very day. Written in his own hand, it set out that "not choosing to act upon his own authority, he had thought it necessary to convene the King's confidential servants, that they might learn his state and see whether it was necessary to remove him to Kew." There was something here to excite grave suspicion. "The manner in which we were convened and the style of the paper rendered it necessary for us to proceed

with caution in framing our answer, especially in the use of the word 'authority.'"

The answer was accordingly framed so as to offer no recognition of what appeared to be thus claimed; and they announced that they were ready to see his Majesty, in consequence of an intimation made to them that it was "the pleasure of the Prince and the royal family."

On the next day the ministers proceeded to Windsor. The object of this visit was to decide on the removal of the patient to Kew, a place more suitable for his proper treatment, as being more private. This matter being settled, it was proposed to exhibit the poor King not to the Chancellor merely but to the Prime Minister. Unfortunately for Captain Payne, he was not in so favourable a state for this purpose as he had been two days before. The Chancellor shed big tears at the affecting spectacle, which were duly ridiculed. The sight might indeed have had some effect in securing his wavering allegiance. It was indeed piteous enough. The colder Pitt owned that the King was deranged, but that his conversation was surprisingly coherent. In concert with the Queen he had brought down Dr. Addington. The Prince declined to see the ministers then, contenting himself with a written message by the Duke of York, couched in "rather royal style," and which was replied to with a cautiously-drawn paper which did not admit his authority, and at the same time did not proffer any advice. He had a positive dislike to Mr. Pitt, whose respectful hostility had met him at every turn. He was determined, as Sir G. Elliot wrote to his wife, "to have nothing to do with him, since he had insulted him whenever he could, and was arrogant to him both in manner and conduct."

The imperious minister, before he left the Castle, was to have his suspicions once more confirmed as to the fidelity of Thurlow in the most curious way. As the council broke up, their hats were brought to the ministers; but the Chancellor's alone could not be found. He was in some confusion at this loss, when—Lord Stanhope heard Mr. W. Grenville tell the story—a servant came running with the missing article, saying that he had found it in the Prince of Wales's room. The awkwardness of this discovery, and the significant glances of the party, may be conceived.*

* Mr. Moore makes an odd jumble of this story, representing Thurlow as coming to the Council with the Prince's hat instead of his own. Another version of this story is told by Mr. Wilberforce, which gives Lord Camden the credit of the detection. He was pressing the Chancellor to return to London with him, when the latter made the excuse that he

Still, he was only "rattically inclined," to use Lord Bulkeley's odd expression; and notwithstanding all these interviews and soundings, the Prince and his friends did not find him in a sufficiently encouraging mood to make their offer. Meantime, the awkward discovery at Windsor had circulated among his party, and looks of suspicion greeted him. Grenville, however, had sagacity enough to guess how matters stood; he was even indulgent. "His situation," he writes, "is a singular one. It is unquestionably true that he has seen Fox repeatedly, and certainly the Prince of Wales; and, of all these conversations, he has never communicated one word to any other member of the Cabinet. Yet I am persuaded that he has made no terms with them as yet." He was afraid, too, that it was from Thurlow that the Prince and his party had gained their knowledge of Pitt's plans; not that the Chancellor had deliberately revealed them, but they were inevitably to be gathered from the tenor of his conversation.

Yet in the adoption of these plans he "explicitly agreed with Pitt." His doubtful behaviour had caused deep resentment, and was universally reprobated by those he acted with; Pitt, indeed, from his regard to the King, dissembled his knowledge of the matter, and suppressed all allusion to the subject. But a Cabinet Council, held on the following Saturday, must have been a *mauvais quart d'heure* for the "beetle-browed" Chancellor, whom the cold gaze of his chief and the suspicious reserve of his comrades must have disturbed.

At once, some artfully-designed inquiries were made to test him. Had anyone heard whether Fox had been to Windsor to see the Prince? Did anyone present know anything of his movements? But the rough Chancellor was not to be thus put out of countenance, and declined to be "drawn," as it is called, in this indirect fashion. He joined with the rest, and no doubt with truth, in expressing his ignorance on the point. He even asked if anyone knew what was the colour of Fox's chaise.

Pitt then came direct to the point, and asked if there was anyone among them who desired to unite with the Opposition, and addressed this question personally to the Chancellor. No doubt he also resented being baited in such a style, and answered that that was an abstract question. Pitt retorted that it was a plain one. He desired to know would he join under any circumstances. To this no answer was given. But, strange to say, Pitt seemed to gather from the ominous silence of the rest that a coalition of some kind with the Opposition would be necessary.

had to dine with a friend at Windsor. Lord Camden, having his suspicions aroused, made inquiries, and found that the "friend" was the Prince. The Chancellor was certainly unlucky.

It is Mr. Rose that reports this little scene, and it illustrates curiously the character of the leading actor, and it favours Thurlow. This was on Saturday, the 29th November.

On the Thursday Parliament was to reassemble, so there was no time to be wasted in further coquetry. One cause of the delay in making a direct offer was certainly the noted objection of Fox, who felt what a doubtful gain there was in such an alliance, and how disloyal it would be to put aside Lord Loughborough. Nothing shows how worthy Fox was of that warm affection which his friends bore to him than his scruples, and even at being obliged to take this course. He had spent the whole week in trying "to discourage the notion," and had actually prevented the Prince saying anything to Thurlow that would commit him. But the pressure was too strong, and on the Saturday he ruefully consented. Not but that Lord Loughborough suspected what was going on, and a day or two after the visit to Windsor he addressed a solemn warning to Sheridan against the duplicity of the Chancellor. Nothing could exceed the bitterness of this letter. He drew a picture of Thurlow as a false, self-seeking adventurer, who "wanted to make his way by himself," and who had managed hitherto as one very well practised in that game. The plan of letting him see the King periodically, "the inspection," instead of winning him would be artfully turned to purposes of trimming, as he would then have access to the Prince and to the Queen. It was with this view that he actually contrived that the physicians should magnify the King's disorder so as to lead to the proposal of his visits. "In short, I think he will try to find the key of the back-stairs, and with that in his pocket take any situation that preserves his access and enables him to hold a line between different parties." He laughed at the tears shed over the King as hypocritical, and even with a view of touching the Queen. Their own "best friends," particularly men like Lord John Cavendish, were certain to be alienated, and would be reluctant to take any active part, and would shrink from such an ally. Finally, the Chancellor's position at that moment virtually gave him the command of the House of Lords. He explained how, but the rest of the sentence beginning "for" is provokingly obliterated by damp. It no doubt showed how his ambiguous attitude held him out as having in some degree the confidence of both Prince and Queen.

Lord Loughborough must have been disagreeably surprised to receive an almost supplicating letter from Fox, with a direct proposal that he should waive all his own claims and make way for Thurlow. Fox said he was literally ashamed to write to him; but he explained the pressure that was put on him, and in terms of

humiliation owned that the motive that influenced him was that he shrank from the responsibility that would attach to him, should his refusal be found to have endangered the chances of his party. His feelings were revealed more poignantly in a letter which he despatched to Sheridan. "I have swallowed the pill," he said, "and a most bitter one it was." No wonder he found the pill bitter; since, according to Sir G. Elliot, Fox thought worse of him than of any man in the world. With true forecast, he added he was convinced that it would come to nothing, and their offers be rejected. He never felt so uneasy about any other political thing he ever did in his whole life.

The next point was, who was to make the proposal to Thurlow. Was it to be the Prince himself, Sheridan, or—strange negotiator—Warren, the doctor? which shows how much the latter was a creature of the Prince's. To this point had the matter reached by Saturday night, November 29th. Fox assumed to Sheridan that Loughborough's answer "of course must be consent," as it proved to be. The latter wrote dryly, that it appeared to him to be a strong indication of weakness.

But the wily Chancellor was undecided, and contrived to put aside the proposal; no doubt with the excuse that he had used before, "a pretence of delicacy towards his colleagues."

The unfortunate King had now been removed to Kew, under charge of the Queen, who had first received a notification or declaration from her son that, in consequence of what had passed at the Privy Council, he was prepared to accept the post of Regent; but hoped that she would take on herself "the sole and absolute care of the distraught monarch." The former office, he declared, he claimed from his station and age.

A Council was held at Mr. Pitt's, on Sunday, at noon. Upon its rising, a messenger was despatched to Kew, with a letter to the Queen. At nine o'clock in the evening of the same day the Prince of Wales received a reply from her Majesty, in which were "strongly-expressed sentiments of that prudence, good sense, and maternal and conjugal affection by which her Majesty's conduct had ever been distinguished." Her Majesty informed the Prince that she had been applied to, and urged to take a share in the Regency, as the only means of securing to herself a certainty of preserving the care of the King's person. "But," her Majesty added, "she authorised his Royal Highness to declare that she would on no account take any share in the political affairs of this kingdom; it being her determination to remain at Kew, or wherever else his Majesty might be, and to devote herself wholly to him as his friend and companion." His royal highness's answer, which was immediately returned, contained the most dutiful and

tender professions. It concluded with the assurance that, "if her Majesty's taking any share in the government of this country could give her any additional care or authority over his royal father's person, he should be the first to propose its being conferred; but, her Majesty being the only person upon whom such a trust ought to devolve, she might assure herself that she should be considered as his Majesty's sole guardian, so long as the unhappy malady should continue."*

Here were there the beginnings of that unseemly struggle between mother and son, when contending interests soon imparted to it the bitterest rancour; for it will be seen that it was the interest of one that the King should recover, of the other that he should not.

Theoretically, the Prince was a spectator of this contest; but in practice he was known and accepted as the leader of one side. The conflict was to be of a desperate kind—letters were written in cipher for fear of their being opened; meetings between natural allies were contrived with mysterious secrecy; accusations of treachery, disloyalty, and unscrupulousness were to be bandied to and fro.

No wonder Thurlow's colleagues were mistrustful. Later, when they were arranging the details of the Regency Bill and talking of the restrictions, the Chancellor showed his discontent. After a Cabinet Council, we learn from the Duke of Leeds' MS., the Chancellor remained behind, and discussed with Lord Carmarthen some suggestions that had been made. "He said the paper would not do either for our own sakes or other people's. He then mentioned the difficulty of restrictions and the foolish one respecting the peerage. He agreed there was no probability of the King's recovery, and that, for the quiet of the country, his death might not be a very unfortunate event." This was significant enough. Not unnaturally, the Duke of Richmond, writer of the paper they had been discussing, had his suspicions aroused by finding that on that day Fox had been closeted with the Chancellor at the House of Lords. "He said he thought it shameful for him to be making his terms with the Opposition at the same time that he was present at all our meetings."

* These particulars are to be found in Holt, "Life of George III."

CHAPTER XIV.

1789.

ON Monday, December 4th, Parliament reassembled. The Chancellor had addressed letters of summons to all the Peers, and in the Lower House a call of all the members had been directed. The attendance, therefore, was very large. The appearance of Fox shocked everyone. "His body seemed to be emaciated," as one of the members present described him; "his countenance sallow and sickly, his eyes swollen, while his stockings hung upon his legs, and he rather dragged himself along than walked up the floor to take his seat." The physicians had been examined by the Privy Council the day before, and their report was laid before the House. This was hazy enough, but all inclined to the idea of the King's recovery. Warren alone had declared it impossible to give any precise opinion on the point, and the propriety of putting the question categorically to him was debated more than an hour and a half.

Nothing, however, could be extracted from him, and he declared that he had no data on which to found an opinion. This was a disagreeable surprise for the Prince and his party, who were said to be furious at an opinion which they found not sufficiently thorough, and so different from what they expected from their creature. On the other hand, Dr. Addington was more sanguine than his brethren. Pitt moved that it should be considered at their next meeting, and also gave notice that he should move for a committee to search for precedents applicable to the present crisis. It was faintly objected by Fox and others that the House itself ought to have an opportunity of examining the physicians,

but the matter was not pressed. In the other House much the same proceeding took place. It struck some observers that the Opposition were rather cast down by the result of the day, while some saw in Pitt's proposals a wish to defer the appointment of a regent and make persons outside think it was unnecessary. From this they might gain their first hint of the inflexible mood in which the minister was to encounter them. The following day he himself brought to Kew an aged clergyman who was Rector of Wapping, and who, from a strange fancy, kept a madhouse, which he conducted with extraordinary success. No one suspected at the time that to the introduction of this sagacious practitioner the King was to owe his rapid recovery. For with him he brought confidence and a cheerful hope, while his sensible treatment began almost at once to exhibit results.

On the 10th, when the House met again, Mr. Pitt moved, "That a committee be appointed to examine and report precedents," a motion which was strenuously opposed by Mr. Fox, who contended that it was the duty of Parliament to lose no time in proceeding to provide some measure for the exigency of the present moment. What, he asked, were they going to search for? Not precedents upon their journals, not parliamentary precedents, but precedents in the history of England. There existed no precedents whatever that could bear upon the present case. There was then a person in the kingdom differing from any other person that any existing precedents could refer to—an heir-apparent, of full age and capacity to exercise the regal power. He declared that he had not in his mind a doubt that in the present condition of his Majesty, his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales had as clear, as express a right to exercise the power of sovereignty during the continuance of the incapacity with which it had pleased God to afflict the King, as in the event of his Majesty's having undergone a natural demise!

The moment the fatal words as to the Prince's "right" escaped Fox, Pitt was said to have struck his thigh, saying triumphantly, "I'll unwhig the gentleman for the rest of his life." There was an inconsistency almost ludicrous in such a claim coming from Fox, which was indeed appropriate in some old Tory. Starting to his feet the instant Fox sat down, and with eyes flashing, he declared that the doctrine they had just heard was little short of being treasonable to the Constitution. He scornfully added, the truth was that the Prince had no more right than any individual in the community. He was prepared to admit that the Prince had a claim which was of course entitled to the greatest respect. Then this master of resource proceeded to turn the opening to account, artfully declaring that

now or never a question had arisen which must be settled. The great privileges, "our own rights," had been questioned by one of themselves. And with a haughty confidence he pledged himself to show that the view he had laid down was supported by every precedent. Fox might have gathered from the enthusiastic cheers which greeted Pitt that he had made a monstrous blunder, though a *claque*, formed of the young followers of his party, and who "took the time" from Fitzpatrick, may have encouraged him. Stung by the clever turn Pitt had given to his mistake, he again defiantly reiterated his statement. He declared that the Prince's right could not be more clear even in the case of the King's death. He defied Pitt, "acute as he was," to prove that the Houses had such a power as he claimed.

But everyone must have been amazed at Burke, who now leaped to his feet, and with a bitterness and incoherent fury, fell upon the minister. He seemed to have lost all self-control. In a fury himself, he accused Pitt of "bursting into a flame," and of trying to intimidate them. Where was the boasted freedom of debate, he asked, if they were to be charged with treason "by one of the Prince's competitors?" Instantly he was interrupted by vociferous cries of "Order!" from the excited Treasury bench. This only inflamed him the more, and he declared that he repeated the phrase and would justify it. But the scene that took place in the House of Lords on the next day was more exciting still, when Lord Camden branded Fox's doctrine as new to him, unconstitutional, and extraordinary. Which brought forward Lord Loughborough, who, thus challenged, "in a manly style," says Wraxall, justified the doctrine and avowed it to be his own. Then, assuming the offensive, he assailed Pitt for his doctrine, which, he declared, made the regency elective, which was a thing far more alarming. The Parliament, he said, might set up a pageant of a regent, while they assailed his sovereignty; for, of course, the elected must be the slave of the electors.

Then he showed how, as regards treason and its penalties, the law assumed the Prince to be on the same footing as the King. To his ingenious argument the Chancellor came forward to reply, amid much curiosity and speculation. It was noticed that he was "very sour and crusty," but nothing could be more skilful than the few words he uttered. He affected keenly to discuss the point of law opened by Lord Loughborough, which he declared was new to him, though, at the same time, he was willing to be enlightened and receive all the information on so delicate a topic that could assist him. He then passed a high eulogium on the Prince, whose virtues and merits he praised Lord Loughborough for not introducing as a support for his arguments, and "who

should always have his applause when its expression could not be an act of impertinence."

This was thought by Pitt's friends almost decisive that "he had opened enough of his sentiments to show that he meant to stand by his colleagues." It struck Lord Bulkeley as being "one of the finest speeches he ever heard," and it was greeted with merry "Hear, hears," a testimonial of adhesion "not very frequent in the House of Lords." This beginning of steadiness was thought to be owing to the positive opinion as to the King's state given by Willis, the new doctor, and also to some pressure exerted by Lords Weymouth and Stafford.

Lord Campbell and others have alluded to Pitt's threat of sending Lord Loughborough to the Tower, as reported by the Duke of Leeds. But it seems to have been scarcely seriously intended, for the duke, who heard him, writes in his MS.: "Mr. Pitt said if Lord Loughborough again brought forward his doctrine of devolution, his words should be taken down by the clerk, and if they are not satisfactorily explained, he should be sent to the Tower. . . . He then said that though, seriously speaking, it might not be necessary to proceed to so violent a measure, yet it must be directly met by a resolution." The rumours, however, of passion and prejudice that filled the air were inconceivable. It was urged that the restrictions on the Prince, according to his followers, were an artful device of Pitt's to make him refuse, when a "committee of Regency" would be appointed, of which the minister would be chief, reigning "as King William IV." Burke lashed him as "a competitor for the Regency." When Pitt replied to such attacks it was noticed that "he spoke in a damned passion." The general opinion was that nothing could be more adroit and masterly than his treatment of the whole matter; yet a heated partisan, Lord Sheffield, when everyone was talking of Fox's and Sheridan's blunders, could only see that Pitt was playing the game without temper or judgment, and his "mountebank speeches suit the nonsense of many."

Mr. Rose was listening to Fox's speech, and some words which the latter dropped to those near him showed that he felt alarmed at the effect of his declaration, and meant to explain them away. This he attempted to do on the 12th by declaring that the Prince had a claim—and the only one that had a claim—to the Regency, which, however, it rested with the House to declare and admit. Pitt, however, with an almost malicious logic, declared, while admitting the explanation, that as the point of right had been raised it must be settled before they went a step farther, and

that it was his duty to have it decided that it belonged to the Parliament alone to confer such powers. He affected, however, to make a concession, that the Prince was the most proper and suitable person, and that it was according to the spirit of the Constitution that, subject to certain guards, he should be a Regent, or, as he put it, "whatever portion of the royal power" it might be necessary to invest him with. In reply to a question of Fox's, he even declared that the Prince should not be fettered with a Council, and should be free to choose his own political servants, but that anything likely to embarrass the King's lawful authority on his recovery should be withheld.

This notification was a relief, as it disposed of the rumours of the Council of Regency, "King William the Fourth," and the like; but the question of right was held to be an artful pretext for creating delay. In vain Fox protested; when the indiscreet Sheridan—carried away by his warmth, and panting for place—warned the ministers against the danger of forcing the Prince to assert his right! No wonder Mr. W. Grenville declared that he "had never known a man of the meanest talents guilty of such a blunder." And the uproar which he excited exceeded anything that members could recollect.

Once more the masterful minister had only to turn the opportunity to his advantage, and declare that now—after "so indecent a menace"—he must see to maintaining the rights of the House; and, speaking with great spirit and emphasis, that "the House would do its duty, in spite of any threat, however high the quarter from which it might come."

This heated language shows the pass to which matters had come. The Prince was alarmed and angry, and instantly addressed a letter to the Chancellor, complaining of the disrespect with which he was treated, in this plan being ready to be brought forward without any communication being made to him; and also bitterly inveighed against the whole behaviour of Pitt towards him personally, since the illness of the King began. This was answered by the minister in his haughtiest style, and he took care to show how he resented the manner in which he had been treated by the Prince.

The answer received was as follows. Pitt wrote, on Monday, December 15th, that he had the unhappiness to perceive that his general conduct, and what he had said in the House of Commons, had been represented in a light which neither of them deserved. "I have certainly felt myself bound rather to wait the commands of your Royal Highness, than to intrude on your Royal Highness's time, without having received a previous intimation of your pleasure; at the same time, your Royal Highness will

permit me to recall to your recollection, that I more than once had an opportunity humbly to express my readiness at all times to attend your Royal Highness; and have several times, at Windsor, had the honour to inquire whether your Royal Highness had any orders for me, and have received for answer that you had not." He then explained that he had not announced the plan as reported, the details of which he now unfolded.

To Pitt's communication no reply was sent, so it may be conceived how inflamed was the hostility between the two. But on the same day the Prince had despatched the Duke of York to the House of Lords to disclaim on his part any such intention as had been imputed. After soliciting the indulgence of his hearers, as being unaccustomed to public speaking, he said, "that no claim of right had been made on the part of the Prince; and he was confident that his Royal Highness understood too well the sacred principles which seated the House of Brunswick on the throne of Great Britain, ever to assume or exercise any power, be his claim what it might, not derived from the will of the people, expressed by their representatives, and their Lordships in parliament assembled." This address on the part of the young Prince found much favour, both for its matter as well as for the manner in which it was delivered. But the appeal was ineffectual; nor was that of the Duke of Gloucester more successful. But the point of dramatic interest was reached when the Chancellor rose to speak. The House was crowded, and the leading members of the Lower House were on the steps of the throne. Pitt and his own party, the last to be taken into his confidence, expected to hear him declare his adherence to the Prince. But there was a surprise in store for all. The scene has become historical. He began by dealing a stroke at Pitt, declaring that the question of right—like all abstract questions of right—was odious and need not be opened. The real object was to preserve the King's rights, "so that when Divine Providence shall restore him to his people, he may not find himself disabled from exercising his prerogatives." Then alluding to the piteous spectacle of the afflicted monarch he uttered the hypocritical burst so well known: "My debt of gratitude to him is ample for the numerous honours which he has bestowed on me, which, whenever I forget, may my God forget me. . . ." "O the rascal!"* was an exclamation that broke from Pitt as he listened. This bitter comment of Wilkes' has been often quoted:

* General Manners heard the words, and with natural wonder asked Pitt what was meant by this remark, when the latter gave an account of Thurlow's suspected double-dealing. Wraxall received this account from General Manners himself.—"Posth. Memoirs," iii. 221.

"Forget you! He'll see you d——d first!" Nor was Burke's less witty or original. "Forget you! The best thing that can happen you!"

This scene is usually considered the consummation of "Thurlow's treachery." He was eager to join the Prince, and had drawn back when he saw that there was little or no chance of the Prince coming to power. But, strange to say, the speech was not considered among the Opposition to be a declaration for the King; it amounted to no more than a hypocritical burst of sympathy. It is certain that the dramatic point of this declaration is lost if we find that it made no alteration in the relation of the parties, and that the offers of the Prince and his advisers were continued for a fortnight more. We find that on Christmas Eve he and Mr. Fox had a conversation, in which he announced that the negotiations must come to an end, and desired that no more should be said to him on the subject till the Regency was settled. He advised that the Prince should now make his arrangements without reference to him. Mr. Fox declared that he was perfectly open and explicit. He talked of the constitutional question that was to be debated, and said it was confused and difficult. Then they passed to general topics—travelling, the classics, and, in short, were in perfect good humour. In this conversation he had left a curious impression on that statesman, who had expected to hear from him an outline of the arguments with which he was to confute those of Pitt and his friends. "But," says Mr. Fox, "I could not collect what would be the course of his arguments. He said it was a confused and difficult case, and I therefore suspect he will answer the arguments of others rather than produce his own. My idea is he has thought less on the subject than could be supposed."* This was scarcely the bearing of a traitor, but Fox's open nature did not suspect anything.

The explanation may be that it was directed against Pitt, who, he insinuated, was limiting the King's powers and prerogatives; and this is supported by the King's coldness to Pitt when he recovered. In no case could it apply to his continuing as the Prince's Chancellor, such change of service being common enough in those days.

Still, we find that the Prince's party equally complained of being tricked. Lord Rawdon, the Prince's familiar, talked of his "coquetting" with them, and that, having taken fright and drawn back a little on some show of amendment in the King, "he received from the Prince of Wales and Duke of York, before Fox,

* Lord Campbell, "Life of Lord Loughborough," vol. vi.

so rough a charge of double-dealing that it is impossible he can close with us."* This was written on February 28th.

The year after we find Lord Thurlow expressing himself to the Princess of Wales on the manner he had been treated: "It would make a long story to lay before your Royal Highness in exact detail the circumstances of the period, without which it is impossible to form a judgment, and with which your Royal Highness would be the readiest to discern his futility and folly. The Prince, he believes, is satisfied that his affairs both then and now would have been in a different situation if he had followed sounder advice."† Notwithstanding this low opinion of the Prince, he was soon to become his friend and adviser.

* Cornwallis, "Correspondence."

† Sir G. Elliot, iii. 24.

CHAPTER XV.

1789.

ON the 16th of December, the Prime Minister introduced his resolution in a very convincing speech. He showed that there were precedents; that the argument of the "civil decease" of the King had no foundation, for that then "the Prince would ascend the throne as King, not as Prince; that when the third branch of the legislature was gone or suspended, there was but one plain remedy to resort to—the organs of the people in both Houses." This seemed a refutation of Fox's truly fanciful argument, that King, Lords, and Commons were necessary for any legislative Act. In fact, his statement of the question they had to settle was so briefly framed that it seemed to carry its answer with it; viz. "Whether any person had a right title to assume or to claim the exercise of the royal authority during the infirmity or incapacity of the sovereign; or whether it was the right of the Lords and Commons of England to provide the deficiency?" Nor did he fail to repeat publicly the haughty challenge he had sent to the Prince: "I trust that I shall not be represented to the Prince as undutiful or disrespectful to his Royal Highness; but were I even certain that I should be so represented and considered, I feel that within which prompts me to do what I know to be right; and I will sacrifice every personal consideration to my zeal and attachment to my sovereign and my duty to the public."

The three resolutions were: "1. That it is the opinion of this committee, that his Majesty is prevented by his present indisposition from coming to his Parliament and from attending to public business, and that the personal exercise of the royal authority is thereby, for the present, interrupted. 2. That it is

the opinion of this committee, that it is the right and duty of the Lords spiritual and temporal and Commons of Great Britain, now assembled, and lawfully, fully, and freely representing all the estates of the people of this realm, to provide the means of supplying the defect of the personal exercise of the royal authority, arising from his Majesty's said indisposition, in such manner as the exigency of the case may appear to require. 3. That for this purpose, and for maintaining entire the constitutional authority of the King, it is necessary that the said Lords spiritual and temporal and Commons of Great Britain should determine on the means whereby the royal assent may be given in Parliament to such bills as may be passed by the two Houses of Parliament, respecting the exercise of the powers and authorities of the Crown, in the name and on behalf of the King, during the continuance of his Majesty's present indisposition."

It was evident that here was opened up a great question, on which many would speak and amendments be moved; so it was not unlikely that there was truth in the charge that he was willing to avail himself of the delay. It, indeed, actually proved to be of inestimable service to his cause; for the three weeks thus gained to the King, by Fox's and Sheridan's blunder, might have sufficed to place the Regent in office, and it is probable that the King would not have been "pronounced to have recovered" so speedily as he would have been when in the hands of his own friends. Nor is it fanciful to deny that the young Prince and his train of impoverished followers would have shown a chivalrous *empressement* to lay down their offices as soon as the impartial Willis had pronounced that his royal master was restored.

The first resolution passed. Stung, however, by the disheartening prospect, when they reached the second, Fox made a bitter attack on Pitt. But his speech only showed him to be more indiscreet than he had been before. He spoke of his own relations to the Prince. He accused Pitt of insulting the Prince, "whose favour he was conscious he did not deserve. He was so fond of power that he determined to cripple its exercise for his successors. Why, if his doctrines prevailed, the two Houses might choose for regent a foreigner, a Catholic, and set aside the family of Brunswick!" At which extravagant and ill-judged supposition, the House showed such impatience that Fox had to explain his illustration away.

Nothing could be more crushing than Pitt's reply. Fox had announced himself and his friends to be the successors of the present administration. He did not know upon what authority that declaration was made; but he thought that the House and the country were obliged to him for this seasonable warning of

what they would have to expect. The nation had already had some experience of that right honourable gentleman and his principles. It was well known to be the avowed system of him and his party to endeavour, by the weight and extent of their political influence, to nominate the ministers of the Crown. It could not be denied that they maintained as a fundamental maxim that the ministers ought at all times to be so nominated. It could not but be supposed that by such advisers power would be perverted to a purpose, which it was indeed impossible to imagine that the Prince of Wales could, if he were aware of it, ever endure for a moment. The other side of the House was desponding. "We were shockingly beat," writes Sir G. Elliot; "two hundred and sixty-eight to two hundred and four." Yet every nerve had been strained. The Prince and his brothers were canvassing openly. To Lord Lonsdale, the head of the great house of Lowther, who directed the votes of half-a-dozen members, the Prince had written, asking his support as a personal favour. This he obtained. In fact, at a meeting at Burlington House, Fox assured his friends that they were certain of victory. Nor was victory so improbable; for the demoralisation of the situation produced a spirit of political gambling, it being on the cards either that the King would recover or the Prince be established in his place. Either case was fatal for the losers, and this in consequence of the King's own unconstitutional theory that those who opposed the King's ministry were enemies of the King himself, and that those who sought to displace his ministry sought to displace him. To choose one's side was therefore a matter of peril.*

A discreditable spectacle was the number of distracted waverers and deserters. The list of "rat peers" and "rat members" increased every day; and it was whispered that the most splendid offers and promises were being made. Among these deserters were the Duke of Queensberry, Lords Malmesbury, Lothian, Abergavenny, Cholmondeley, Eglinton, and Rodney, with some baronets. Some of these cases were flagrant. The Duke of Queensberry and Lord Lothian were actively in office about the King. Lord Lothian had been for many years in confidential relations with him. But Lord Malmesbury's behaviour was more extraordinary. He had just been raised to the peerage by the King. The well-known "single-speech Hamilton" was another deserter, after having "eaten toads" for years at Mr. Pitt's table.

* The result was shown first in a sort of "cave" or impartial body, who went by the name of "The Armed Neutrality." It had met at Northumberland House, and consisted of about thirty members of the House of Commons and some thirty peers.

Fox was now so ill that the next debate was put off for a day. On the 20th it was resumed, when the second resolution was passed. On the 22nd the third was debated in the most acrimonious style. Pitt, fortified by the unanimous support of the country, addresses from the great towns pouring in on him, was determined not to make the slightest concession even to the dignity of the Prince. In vain the Opposition urged that after the Prince was invested with his office it would then be proper to settle the restrictions. Pitt would not trust him. "Who can answer," he exclaimed, "for his not using the royal negative when the limitations are presented to him for assent?" Until this was done he proposed to supply the absence of the royal assent by a cumbrous mode of empowering the Chancellor to affix the great seal; a fallacy it will be seen, as it was the delegated act of the two Houses. It justly acquired the nickname of "the phantom." No wonder, then, that on the 22nd Burke should have attacked this theory, tearing and rending it with all the powers of his sarcasm and invective. "He was wilder than ever," said an observer, "and laid himself and party open more than ever speaker did. He is Folly personified, but shaking his cap and bells under the laurel of Genius. Among other things, he said that Pitt's proposals could not be adopted by them as gentlemen, as cavaliers." "The words," adds Sir William Young, who was writing these notes, "will not be forgot." "As little acquainted with the interior of Carlton House as of Buckingham House, I profess," adds Burke, "only to deliver my sentiments in a manner becoming a simple citizen. The great seal, it appears, is to be affixed to a commission, robbing the executive power of its due function. A composition of wax and copper is to represent the sovereign. So preposterous a fiction merits only contempt and ridicule. I disclaim all allegiance, I renounce all obedience to a king so formed. I worship the gods of our glorious Constitution, but I will not now bow down before Priapus!" Against the Chancellor, Burke inveighed in the most personal terms. "I approve not," exclaimed he, "of robbery, housebreaking, or any other felony. Yet is each of these crimes less inexcusable than law forgery. If the unfortunate monarch, whom we all lament, could know the proposition now agitated, he would no doubt cry out with Macbeth—

Upon my head they placed a fruitless crown,
Thence to be wrench'd with an unlineal hand,
No son of mine succeeding.

Restore me," he would add, "to my former state. Let me not behold a black-browed phantom seated on my throne!" This

coarse vein of allusion he followed up by likening the character to the god Priapus in the hands of the carpenter Pitt. Then carried away by this madness, as it seemed to the ministerial party, he let out the names of some of those whom his party intended advancing, rewarding such as Lord Fitzwilliam, who was to be Marquis of Rockingham, and Lord George Cavendish. More, it was thought, would have been revealed but for his friends pulling him back, and for the ironical cheers from the ministerial benches.

All this brought fresh glory to Pitt, to whom the City of London was now proposing to offer a present of three thousand pounds a-year on his quitting office, a thing now considered to be settled. The debate in the Lords, when the resolution reached it, was even more exciting. It was remarkable for Lord Shelburne's (now Lord Lansdowne) brief but admirable summary of the question. The Chancellor strongly supported Lord Lansdowne's arguments,* while he bestowed eulogiums on the Prince. In reply to Lord Loughborough's assertions of the right which his royal highness possessed to exercise the Regency, Thurlow demanded: "What means the term of regent? Where is it defined? In what law book, or in what statute? I have heard of protectors, guardians, and lords justices; but I know not where to look for the office and functions of a regent. To what end then address the Prince to take on him a power the limits of which are not ascertained?" "No man entertains a higher respect than myself," continued he, "for that illustrious person. I wish as ardently the advancement of his honour and interests as those who affect more attachment to him. But I never will argue that he possesses any inherent right to the regency, or that, as heir-apparent, he can possess such a right. There might even arise Princes of Wales whose conduct would justify the two Houses in setting them aside from the Regency. It becomes, therefore, expedient that we should not abandon the power inherent in us; nor, under the circumstances in which we are placed, fail to declare it to be our right." When the division took place, only sixty-six peers were found in the minority.†

* Lord Hawksbury told Mrs. Harcourt that he had prevailed on the Chancellor to make one of his finest speeches for the cause, probably this one.

† The Dukes of York and Cumberland voted in the minority; as the Duke of Gloucester would have likewise done, if he had not been prevented from attending by severe indisposition. All the Lords of the Bedchamber, with the single exception of the Duke of Queensberry, adhered to Government. Thirteen bishops, including the Archbishop of Canterbury, were likewise found on that side; three members of the episcopal bench voting with Opposition. The Scottish peers ranged themselves, six with administration, seven on the other side.

CHAPTER XVI.

1789.

THE resolution being passed, and the bill being prepared, founded on the principles of the resolution, we will now turn to contemplate what was going on at Windsor, where the Chancellor was still the central figure.

“The Prince, having understood that the Chancellor had used some expressions of which he thought he had cause to complain, desired to see his lordship, and generously afforded him an opportunity of vindicating himself, if the rumour were unfounded. The Chancellor assured his Royal Highness that he never had, even in thought, deviated from the profound respect he owed him. He begged to know the full extent of what he had been charged with, in the full confidence of being able to exculpate himself. His lordship proceeded to say that what opinions he had publicly advanced his legal situation compelled; but that he felt himself strongly devoted to his Royal Highness: and that he might assure himself that he should on no account unite with Mr. Pitt, or enter into any opposition to his Royal Highness’s government, when his dismissal, which he saw was at hand, should take place. He should, on the contrary, give it every support in his power; and if, at a future day, his services should be thought of use, he should be happy to offer them. The Chancellor spoke of Mr. Pitt as a haughty, impracticable spirit, with whom it would be impossible for him ever cordially to unite. He added that the whole party was split, divided, and discontented.”*

The family dissensions, too, had reached a scandalous stage, chiefly owing to the Queen. A hostile system of exclusion was

* “Particulars” in Holt’s “Life of George III.”

adopted, directed by her. The Prince was not allowed to see the King; or else such difficulties were thrown in the way as made it disagreeable and almost impossible. When he wished to see his mother, the same obstructive course was pursued. As he fairly argued in his letter of grievances, he "could not force his way in." Up to this time, too, it had been the practice to send the physicians' report of each day to the Prince—"the only distinction," he sarcastically said, "made between myself and the rest of your Majesty's subjects," and certainly a privilege to which he was entitled. Now express orders were given to the doctors that this was not to be done.

In the confusion of the removal to Kew, it had been forgotten that the King's papers and jewels had been left open and unprotected. The Prince, after consulting with the Chancellor, repaired with Lord Weymouth, the King's friend, and Lord Brudenell, the Keeper of the Privy Purse, to Windsor, and made them, in his presence, collect and seal up all these articles, taking a formal receipt from them.

When the Queen heard of this reasonable precaution, she fell into a fury. As the Prince describes the scene: "To my extreme astonishment, she condescended, at my next interview, to a species of warmth of reproaches, into which nothing could have surprised or betrayed her Majesty but a degree of passion which I had never witnessed or believed to exist in her Majesty before." Without ascribing the Queen's dislike to him to this cause, he had "soon to lament it, as the first open demonstration of it." This is very significant, and shows the hostility between the hard German lady and her son.

"What a fine fellow my brother York is!" the Prince was heard to say at a supper; "he never forsakes me." Then, describing the scene of the jewels and his mother's anger, he repeated his worthy brother's speech to her. "Says York to her, 'I believe, madam, you are as much deranged as the King!'"* "She is playing the devil," wrote Sir Gilbert Elliot to his lady, "and has, all this time, been at the bottom of the cabals and intrigues against the Prince. It is believed that she was ready to accept the Regency, if the Prince had been advised to refuse it."†

This was undoubtedly part of the policy of her faction, and perhaps the object of Mr. Pitt's almost insulting treatment of the Prince. "Mr. Pitt," wrote Mr. Storer, "is so powerful that he can do as he pleases. Had he known his own power at the beginning of this business, perhaps he would never have thought

* Auckland, "Correspondence," ii. 280.

† "Life of Sir G. Elliot," i. 252.

of the Prince of Wales as Regent; it being now undoubtedly proved, I think, that he might have conferred the Regency on the Queen. If he has been guilty of any error, it has been in not having foreseen his strength in Parliament."

This envenomed feeling, with the sense that they were looked on by their family and the ministers as enemies, is some justification for the many outbursts which were set down as "indecent" on the part of the foolish youths. Both talked loudly of their grievances everywhere and in all companies. The following description shows how painfully strained must have been the relations of this happy family.* Through the curious record before alluded to† we are enabled to hear the royal brothers explaining themselves on the situation.

"At entertainments given by the Duke of York, having for their avowed object the conciliation of members of both Houses, the Prince was present, and expatiated with great eloquence upon "the indignities and injustice he had experienced from the usurpers of those powers of which he conceived he ought to be possessed, as the natural representative of a father unhappily incapable of exercising them, and, to the infinite affliction of his family, not likely to be ever again in a situation to hold the reins of government." He said: "Reports have been circulated that I had frequent interviews with Mr. Pitt. The truth is I saw him but once during my stay at Windsor. In the first days of the King's illness, and before I had recovered from the shock it occasioned me, some person told me that Mr. Pitt and the Duke of Richmond were come. My mind fully occupied by the sad state of things, I hardly heard, and it soon escaped my recollection that they were there. Some time after, Mr. St. Leger entered the room, and told me that the Duke of Richmond and Mr. Pitt had been waiting two hours. I awoke as it were from a trance, and desired that they might instantly be admitted. The duke was most obsequious, bowed incessantly. Mr. Pitt was most stately. He said he should do so-and-so, and looked with unforgiving haughtiness." He had assured the Queen he should be happy to conform in everything to the wishes of his royal father; and he promised that every indication of his intentions previous to his lamented indisposition should be religiously observed. Her Majesty having then received no unworthy impression, was satisfied and happy in receiving this assurance, and permitted him and the Duke of York to assist in packing up and to put their

* In the palace, even the royal pages betrayed their master, and no less than four were afterwards dismissed for furnishing the Prince with information.

† Given in Holt's "Life of George III."

seals upon the Crown jewels and some valuable movables of the King's, which, together with the Queen's jewels, were conveyed to Kew when the Queen went thither. He had now to lament a sad revolution in her Majesty's opinion, which had been effected by mischievous and designing persons. He had received a letter from her Majesty of her own writing, but not of her own dictating. It charged him with designing to take advantage of the weak state of the King to get possession of his treasures, and to change the whole state of things.

"Ladies —, H—, and C— were censured by his Royal Highness as the advisers of this letter. He said he had charged the last mentioned with a knowledge of it, and, if he had not before had a certainty of it, her confusion would have given it. He complained of the personal indignity with which Mr. Pitt had treated him on every occasion. He specified two important instances of most indecorous conduct towards him. The summonses to members of the Privy Council to examine the physicians (of which he had received no previous intimation), and the restrictions upon the power of a regent, had both been sent by common Treasury messengers, and left without ceremony with a porter at Carlton House!

"The Prince was not present at the fourth and last entertainment. The Duke of York entered upon the interesting detail of the injury done to his brother in withholding his acknowledged rights, and of the imposition practised upon the public by fallacious representations of the King's state. His royal highness said: 'It must be imagined that the subject was a most painful one to him; that only the solicitude he felt to impress a sense of his brother's wrongs, and to warn gentlemen whom there was a design to mislead, could have induced him to enter upon it.'

"His royal highness spoke concisely but clearly. He declared 'that a string of fallacies had been obtruded upon the public; gave his royal word that not one of the King's children was permitted to approach him;' and lamented that 'the Queen, wrought upon by insidious arts, particularly by the machinations of the Chancellor, seemed resolved to abet the daring attempt to supersede his brother's just pretensions, and to promote the views of those most inimical to him.'"

His royal highness then mentioned an attempt, on the preceding Thursday, to prevent Sir C. Baker's seeing the King, which was rendered abortive by his steadily refusing to sign the bulletin, if that were not permitted. The Duke said "that endeavours had also been used, the following day, to prevent Dr. Warren's entering the royal chamber, Willis assuring him that the King was in such a state as promised immediate recovery,

and that his presence would do harm. Warren, upon an acknowledgment being extorted that the Queen had seen the King that morning, insisted upon being admitted, as one whose presence was less likely to agitate the royal mind. He found his Majesty sitting quietly, and attentively considering a Court calendar, which he was translating from beginning to end into doggerel Latin. He accosted Warren upon his entrance, 'Ricardensus Warrenensus, baronetensus.' " The Duke said, "Warren had assured him that after a long and minute examination he brought away the melancholy conviction that the mind was only subdued, and that its sanity was in no degree restored."

On the Duke being asked what was the general state of his Majesty's health, he replied, "he was told that he was deplorably emaciated; but that that circumstance was as much concealed as possible." His royal highness said, "that the Queen seemed no longer to have confidence in any person but the Chancellor, who, while he was flattering her Majesty with every demonstration of zeal, was paying obsequious court to his brother." He added: "He seems to have learnt a lesson of duplicity from Pitt. The Chancellor," the Duke continued, "seldom fails to receive three or four letters a day from the Queen, and he generally sees her once every day. Till concealments respecting the King began to be practised, and till the Queen suddenly declared her resolution to accept the Regency, if the Prince would not accept it with severe restrictions, my brother and myself omitted not one day paying our duty to her; but, since these events, our visits have been discontinued."

The Duke concluded by expressing in strong terms "the misery he felt at being compelled to make an appeal to the public, that induced the necessity of exposing circumstances over which every principle of delicacy, feeling, and filial affection prompted his royal brother and himself to throw a veil; and which a sense of what they owed to that public could alone prevent their interposing; their duty to that outweighing, in their estimation, all that could affect themselves."

"*January 24th.*—The King had been terribly affected during the last seven or eight days. On the 19th his Majesty had been induced to walk in the garden. The anxiety of the amiable and royal female relatives drew them to an upper window. Regardless of everything but his own impulses, his Majesty threw his hat into the air and hurled a stick he held in his hand to an incredible distance, such was the force that animated him. His Majesty then proceeded with a rapid movement towards the Pagoda, which he was very desirous to ascend. Being thwarted in that, he became sullen and desperate, threw himself upon the

earth ; and so great was his strength and so powerful his resistance that it was three-quarters of an hour before Willis and four assistants could raise him."

Nor were the scenes in the ranks of the Prince's party more edifying.

"Meantime, nothing was equal to the violence of the party, *de part et d'autre*, but most the Prince's side, because disappointed. The Duke of Portland has declared to the Prince his determination not to act with Mr. Sheridan in council, who is just now Prime Minister at Carlton House. He and his wife live with Mrs. Fitzherbert, having no other habitation. Charles Fox, besides ill-health, is plagued to death all day long ; dissatisfied with Mr. Sheridan's supremacy, and not choosing to be questioned by Mr. Rolle, who vows he will, in spite of threats and opposition, *approfondir* that matter.

"But what you will not see is the strange supper of which I am going to tell you, and which Lady Mount-Edgcumbe had from the Duchess of Gordon herself, who, being entirely for Mr. *Pett*, is vastly teased by the princes, whom she never fails to answer extremely well. A few days ago Mrs. Richard Walpole gave a supper to the two princes, Mrs. Fitzherbert, Colonel Fullarton, Jack Payne (who is such a favourite he is to be a Lord of the Admiralty, and leans on the Prince as he walks, not the Prince on him), Miss Vanneck, and a few others ; the Duchess of Gordon the only Pittite. Then says Jack Payne, after a great many invectives against Mr. Pitt, calling him William the Fourth and William the Conqueror, etc., 'Mr. Pitt's chastity will protect the Queen ;' which was received by all present as a very good thing. The Duchess of Gordon* (for which you will like her, though a Scotchwoman) declared if they began to abuse the Queen she would leave the room. And now I am in a fright lest I should have told you all this before."

The triumphant Pitt now addressed a formal letter to the Prince, announcing to him the nature of the restrictions it was proposed to lay upon him. The Prince of Wales complained bitterly of a studied affront in the mode of delivery of this letter, that it was left at his door by a servant, though this was denied ; but he retaliated by addressing his answer not to Pitt, but to the Chancellor.†

* "Jack Payne, the Prince's secretary, one day uttered some ribaldry about the Queen, in the presence of the Duchess of Gordon. 'You little, insignificant, good-for-nothing, upstart, pert, chattering puppy,' said her grace, 'how dare you name your royal master's royal mother in that style ?'"—"Lady Harcourt's Diary," Locker MSS., in Massey's "History of England," iii. 389.

† "Court and Cabinets," ii. 87.

Mr. Pitt's communication was dated Tuesday night, December 30th, 1788.

"It is their humble opinion that your Royal Highness should be empowered to do all acts which might legally be done by his Majesty; with provisions, nevertheless, that the care of his Majesty's royal person, and the management of his Majesty's household, and the direction and appointment of the officers and servants therein should be in the Queen, under such regulations as may be thought necessary. That the power to be exercised by your Royal Highness should not extend to the granting the real or personal property of the King (except as far as relates to the renewal of leases), to the granting any office in reversion, or to the granting, for any other term than during his Majesty's pleasure, any pension, or any office whatever, except such as must by law be granted for life, or during good behaviour; nor to the granting any rank or dignity of the peerage of this realm to any person, except his Majesty's issue who shall have attained the age of twenty-one years."

THE PRINCE OF WALES TO LORD LOUGHBOROUGH.

"MY DEAR LORD,

"I have just received a letter from the Minister with such restrictions as no dictator could possibly, I think, ever have been barefaced enough to have brought forward. . . . Pray come to Charles, as soon as you possibly can, to take these matters into consideration.

"I am, my dear Lord,

"Most truly yours,

"G. P."

The result of this consultation was a reply which the Chancellor was, oddly, selected to be the bearer of.

Writes the Duke of Leeds: "At Carlton House a note was delivered to him in the hall desiring him to go to Mr. Fox in South Street (Mr. F., for more quiet, was removed to Mrs. Armistead's), who was not well enough to come out, and that there the Prince would meet him. He found there Lord Robert Spencer and two other members of the House, who, when Mr. Fox came, withdrew. Shortly afterwards the Prince arrived. I think the Chancellor said the Prince received the paper afterwards and offered to send it to the Chancellor, but, his lordship declining giving him that trouble, the Prince signed it and sealed it up."

“He observes, therefore, only generally on the heads communicated by Mr. Pitt—and it is with deep regret the Prince makes the observation, that he sees in the contents of that paper a project for producing weakness, disorder, and insecurity in every branch of the administration of affairs—a project for dividing the royal family from each other—for separating the Court from the State; and therefore, by disjoining government from its natural and accustomed support, a scheme for disconnecting the authority to command service from the power of animating it by reward; and for allotting to the Prince all the invidious duties of government, without the means of softening them to the public, by any one act of grace, favour, or benignity.

“The Prince’s feelings on contemplating this plan are also rendered still more painful to him, by observing that it is not founded on any general principle, but is calculated to infuse jealousies and suspicions (wholly groundless, he trusts) in that quarter, whose confidence it will ever be the first pride of his life to merit and obtain.

“With regard to the motive and object of the limitations and restrictions proposed, the Prince can have but little to observe. No light or information is offered him by his Majesty’s ministers on these points. They have informed him what the powers are which they mean to refuse him, not why they are withheld.

“The Prince, however, holding as he does that it is an undoubted and fundamental principle of this Constitution, that the powers and prerogatives of the Crown are vested there, as a trust for the benefit of the people, and that they are sacred only as they are necessary to the preservation of that poise and balance of the Constitution which experience has proved to be the true security of the liberty of the subject—must be allowed to observe, that the plea of public utility ought to be strong, manifest, and urgent, which calls for the extinction or suspension of any one of those essential rights in the supreme power, or its representative; or which can justify the Prince in consenting, that in his person an experiment shall be made to ascertain with how small a portion of kingly power the executive government of this country may be carried on.

“The Prince has only to add that if security for his Majesty’s repossessing his rightful government, whenever it shall please Providence, in bounty to the country, to remove the calamity with which he is afflicted, be any part of the object of this plan, the Prince has only to be convinced that any measure is necessary, or even conducive to that end, to be the first to urge it as the preliminary and paramount consideration of any settlement, in which he would consent to share.

"If attention to what is presumed might be his Majesty's feelings and wishes, on the happy day of his recovery, be the object, it is with the truest sincerity the Prince expresses his firm conviction that no event would be more repugnant to the feelings of his royal father, than the knowledge that the government of his son and representative had exhibited the sovereign power of the realm in a state of degradation, of curtailed authority, and diminished energy—a state, hurtful in practice to the prosperity and good government of his people, and injurious in its precedent to the security of the monarch, and the rights of his family. Upon that part of the plan, which regards the King's real and personal property, the Prince feels himself compelled to remark, that it was not necessary for Mr. Pitt, nor proper, to suggest to the Prince the restraint he proposes against the Prince's granting away the King's real and personal property. The Prince does not conceive that during the King's life he is, by law, entitled to make any such grant; and he is sure that he has never shown the smallest inclination to possess any such power. But it remains with Mr. Pitt to consider the eventual interests of the royal family, and to provide a proper and natural security against the mismanagement of them by others.

"The Prince has discharged an indispensable duty in thus giving his free opinion on the plan submitted to his consideration.

"His conviction of the evils which may arise to the King's interests, to the peace and happiness of the royal family, and to the safety and welfare of the nation, from the government of the country remaining longer in its present maimed and debilitated state, outweighs, in the Prince's mind, every other consideration, and will determine him to undertake the painful trust imposed upon him by the present melancholy necessity (which of all the King's subjects he deplores the most), in full confidence, that the affection and loyalty to the King, the experienced attachment to the house of Brunswick, and the generosity which has always distinguished the nation, will carry him through the many difficulties inseparable from this most critical situation, with comfort to himself, with honour to the King, and with advantage to the public.

"GEORGE P.

"Carlton House, Jan. 2, 1789."

The authorship of this has often been discussed, being given to Sheridan or to Sir Gilbert Elliot. It was thought that it might have been the handiwork of the first, as he was so intimate with the Prince. Sir James Mackintosh, consulted by Moore,

declared from internal evidence that it must have been Burke's and no other's, though Moore declared that "the violent state of this extraordinary man's temper during the debates would have rendered him an unfit person for such an office." Sir Gilbert Elliot, who had written, and was to write, many such public letters for the Prince and his party, disclaimed it and furnished the true answer. "Not a word in it was his," he said; "it was originally Burke's, altered a little, but not improved, by Sheridan and other critics."*

The Duke of Leeds, however, showed his sagacity at guessing at the authorship. "The Prince of Wales's comments on Pitt's letters filled three quarto pages, showing displeasure to Pitt. It was, upon the whole, a strange performance, by no means an able one; now and then appeared something of Sheridan's language, and still more of Loughborough's."

The haughty Pitt now proposed that a reply should be sent to this document; and, as the Duke of Leeds informs us, "at a Cabinet on the 5th, Mr. Pitt read the proposed answer to the Prince. The Chancellor, however, disapproved sending any. They tried to convince him, urging the mischievous effect on the public of a division of opinion. The Chancellor, however, remained sulky." He complained of being misrepresented. At last an expedient was thought of, that he should go and ask the Prince of Wales if he wished or expected to receive one, and if so, then present it. To this he agreed, though not with a good grace. The Duke of Richmond said: "That man will ruin us all yet." Lord Camden said privately to the Duke of Leeds, that he was a bad man. Accordingly the Chancellor wrote to the Prince of Wales on the subject of the answer, and received a note from the Prince, dated Piccadilly (the Prince dining at the Duke of Queensberry's), desiring him to come to him at nine to South Street. The Chancellor went, and found the Prince and Mr. Fox. The Chancellor held the letter in his hand, and asked the Prince whether he expected any answer, to which the Prince answered in the negative; but on Mr. Fox observing that as there was one prepared it might as well be looked at, the Chancellor delivered it to him.

After much wrangling over the "report" of the physicians (it filled four hundred folio pages), Mr. Pitt, on the 16th of January, introduced his "Restrictions." They were in the shape of resolutions, the first of which conferred the honours of Regency; the second restrained him from granting peerages, save to the royal family; the third from giving places, save under conditions; the fourth protected the King's property; and the fifth and most

* "Life and Letters," i. 269.

important, introduced on the 19th, gave the care of the King's person to the Queen, with power to appoint all officers about his person with the assistance of a Council. These were duly passed by both Houses. It was this resolution on the household that excited the most tumult. Its object was evident. By household he explained himself to mean any office—"master of horse, chamberlain, and so downward to the pages, beefeaters, and grooms." It was noted that he spoke as though he were "ashamed of such a scheme." It was assailed in vehement style by Sheridan, who stigmatised it as a plan for governing the country through the Queen, when the minister himself shall have been dismissed.

He denounced Pitt's duplicity and arrogance, and sneered at the Queen with ironical praises, and pictured the former coming down to the House attended by his household. Mr. Fullarton, a fiery Scot, quoted from the "History of France" the description of Queen Isabella and her minister Marvilliers; a woman whom he described as attached only to her treasures, and governed by her chancellor.

The Council was to be composed, as Sir G. Elliot heard, of the great officers of the household, the Archbishop of Canterbury, and the Chancellor, "so that this immense job was not trusted even to the Queen, but put directly into the hands of the faction itself."

When it reached the House of Lords on January 26th, the discussion was expected to be interesting from a melancholy spectacle of what Lord Bulkeley would have called "a rat bishop," viz. Watson of Llandaff. Never was there so unlucky a miscalculation. He was a man of a certain power and talent; and for his two hours' eager advocacy, it was reported he was to receive splendid promotion when the Regent came into office. But he was never forgiven by the King, and had to endure for the rest of his life perpetual banishment to his obscure Welsh diocese.

But there was to be another scene of treachery more painful still. Thurlow now stood forward to bid for the gratitude of the recovering monarch, having at last made up his mind. After dwelling on that piteous and lamentable situation, "a misfortune equal to any which has ever fallen to the lot of man since misfortune was known upon the earth;" then drawing a picture of the ingratitude the royal sufferer had been treated with—

Deserted, in his utmost need,
By those his former bounty fed--

he burst into tears. This exhibition excited the ridicule of Burke, who, when Pitt moved to wait on the Prince with the resolutions,

frantically burst out in the most violent agitation. The minister was a despot. "Slaves," he cried, "do you presume to hesitate?" And later he held up the Chancellor—his tears and his "phantom"—in his wittiest vein. "The other House is not yet recovered from that extraordinary burst of the pathetic which was exhibited the other evening; it has not yet dried its eyes nor been restored to its placidity. The tears shed on that occasion were not the tears of patriots for dying laws, but of lords for expiring places. They were the 'iron tears that flowed down Pluto's cheek,' and rather resembled the dismal bubbling of Styx than the gentle streams of Aganippe. In fact, they were tears for his Majesty's bread. The Lords of the Household would stick by the King's loaf as long as a single cut of it remained; they would fasten on the crust, and gnaw it while two crumbs of it held together; and they would proudly declare, at the same time, that it was the honour of the service, the dignity of the office, which alone they regarded." Then, bursting into a new paroxysm, he exclaimed: "I cannot, for my soul, understand the means of this art-magic, any more than I can doubt the purpose. I see a phantom raised. But I never heard of one being raised in a family but for the purpose of robbing the house. The whole ceremonial, instead of being a representative of the forms of the Constitution, is a masquerade, a mummery, a piece of buffoonery, used to ridicule every form of government."

At last the resolutions were passed, and it was on the 30th of January that a deputation, consisting of Lords Camden and Stafford, with Pitt and some others, waited on the Prince with an address; to which he gave the following reply, supposed to be written by Sheridan, but which was, in truth, the work of Sir G. Elliot, done in a hurry, half an hour before it was spoken:

"MY LORDS AND GENTLEMEN,

"I thank you for communicating to me the resolutions agreed to by the two Houses; and I request you to assure them, in my name, that my duty to the King my father, and my anxious concern for the safety and interests of the people, which must be endangered by a longer suspension of the exercise of the royal authority, together with my respect for the united desires of the two Houses, outweigh, in my mind, every other consideration, and will determine me to undertake the weighty and important trust proposed to me, in conformity to the resolutions now communicated to me.

"I am sensible of the difficulties that must attend the trust, in the peculiar circumstances in which it is committed to my charge, in which, as I am acquainted with no former example,

my hopes of a successful administration cannot be founded on any past experience; but confiding that the limitations on the exercise of the royal authority, deemed necessary for the present, have been approved only by the two Houses as a temporary measure, founded on the loyal hope, in which I ardently participate, that his Majesty's disorder may not be of long duration; and trusting, in the meanwhile, that I shall receive a zealous and united support in the two Houses and in the nation, proportioned to the difficulty attending the discharge of my trust in this interval, I will entertain the pleasing hope that my faithful endeavours to preserve the interests of the King, his crown, and people, may be successful."

All this was merely preparatory to the introduction of the bill itself. The next step was to issue a commission, who were to be empowered to set the great seal to a patent for giving the royal assent to the regency bills now to be passed. These "roundabout" devices seem ludicrous enough. The Prince and the Duke of York were included in the commission, but the latter rose in his place and declined the honour for himself and for his brother, and the Duke of Cumberland did the same for himself as well as the Duke of Gloucester.

When the bill was introduced in the House of Commons, Burke burst out once more into fury. It seems incredible that so sound a mind could deliver itself to such intemperance. He accused Dr. Willis of rashness, impetuosity, and presumption, in taking upon him to fix the probable duration of his Majesty's illness. He exclaimed: "Of his sanity, should God restore it, where was the confirmation? With a junto—an obscure and contemptible Council! manifestly not wishing to produce a sound King, but to usurp the Government without one—where a proclamation was to supersede the two Houses—a proclamation from authority existing no more—for the King governs not—but is governed!" He taxed the bill with reviving the doctrine of divine right, which had been exploded on the expulsion of the House of Stuart in favour of another House. "In the idiot abominations of the Stuart race divine right was the assumption of the Prince alone! it was now more monstrously to be usurped by the Minister!" "The bill," he said, "was not only to degrade the Prince of Wales, but the whole House of Brunswick, who were to be outlawed, excommunicated, and attainted, as having forfeited all claim to the confidence of the country."

This extraordinary declaration having excited the smiles of several of the members, Mr. Burke's indignation rose with his climax, and he directly charged the House "with degrading the

royal family ; sowing the seeds of future distractions and disunion among them, and proceeding to act treasons, for which the justice of the country would one day overtake them, and bring them to trial ! ” He received a fine rebuke from Mr. Pitt, who observed that when Mr. Burke chose to indulge himself with a direct attack upon him, in the style of invective in which he was accustomed to deliver himself in that House, he seldom thought it worth his while to make him any answer, because his speeches, from their extraordinary style, and the peculiarly violent tone of warmth and of passion with which they were generally delivered, seldom failed to make that impression which those to whom they were directed wished them to make.

But even here the consequences of the Prince's rash marriage and his flagrant denial were to pursue him. Mr. Rolle, who had been threatening, in spite of all cajolery, that he would bring forward his favourite subject, at last found an opportunity made to his hand in a clause depriving the Prince of the regency should he marry a Papist. He proposed an amendment, awkward to deal with, “excluding any one thus married already, either in law or fact.” The old ground was once more gone over, and it was urged that the royal marriage virtually repealed the Act of Settlement and its heavy penalties. But it was noted that not one of the law officers now said a word ; while Dundas, refuting this argument as derogatory to the Act of Settlement, “declared that he regarded the solemn assurance of Mr. Fox as decisive.” Then alluding to Fox's absence in the country, he said he was convinced that “if anything had occurred to make him change his opinion, he (Mr. Fox) would at all hazards, even at the risk of his life, come down to the House.” This artful thrust must have gone home. But he (Mr. Fox) was now considered to be restored, and it was believed that he delayed returning to avoid this awkward situation. The most curious position in this episode was the part taken by Mr. Grey, who rebuked Rolle for his conduct, and imputed to him the worst of motives. This, as he knew Rolle was speaking the truth, seemed strange. But of late his relations with the Prince had become confidential.*

On the household question Burke again broke out in extraordinary style, and, on Pitt's protesting against stripping the King of the adornments of royalty, exclaimed : “Did they recollect that they were talking of a sick king, of a monarch smitten by the hand of Omnipotence ; and that the Almighty

* In December, when he wrote to Sir G. Elliot at Brookes's : “I did not see the Prince, for he had just retired to a private room with Grey, who is a great favourite, and is admitted to most private or Cabinet Councils.”

had hurled him from his throne and plunged him into a condition that drew upon him the pity of the meanest peasant in the kingdom? This produced loud calls to order, and the cries of 'Take down his words,' interrupted him; and the Marquis of Graham told Mr. Burke that neither he, nor any man in that House, should dare to say the King was hurled from his throne. A scene of great confusion followed, during which Burke persisted in his course, and justified his expression by the language of the prayer offered up in our churches for the King's recovery, and, proceeding in the same strain, asked: 'Ought they, at that hour of sickness and calamity, to clothe his bed with purple? Ought they to make a mockery of him, putting a crown of thorns on his head, a reed in his hand, and dressing him in a raiment of purple, to cry, Hail! King of the British!'"* The disgust expressed by the House at this indecorous allusion, at length induced the orator to change his tone, and to arraign the clause with more chastened animation, and with more temperate eloquence.

The effect of one of these restrictions was to prevent a peerage being given to Prince William, which "the party thought was an act of pure malice." This was said to have hurt the Prince of Wales more than all the rest, and the Duke of York was heard to say, in a coffee-house, that it was very hard that Mr. Pitt should punish his brother, who had never done anything to offend him; but that for himself, Mr. Pitt was right to do him all the injury that he could, for he had opposed him.

Sir G. Elliot said later, the plan was "to consider the Prince and everybody that is suspected of the least attachment to him, as a prey, to be hunted down and destroyed without mercy. This, I assure you, is the private conversation of him and the Queen's whole set."

It was then proposed that the Duke of York and the other Princes should be of the Council; which was plainly and *sans façon* resisted by Pitt, who declared that if the Prince was unsuited, on various accounts, to have the care of the King, the argument applied, *a fortiori*, to the others. The last clause was concerned with the delicate question as to who was to have power to declare the King restored to health. This was to be done when it should appear proper to her Majesty and to five members of the Council, and by them should be notified to the President of the Privy Council; and that, the act being then complete, the Regent should cease to rule, and the King resume his office. This

* On the following morning Mr. Burke found chalked on his door a sort of parody of the daily bulletins: "Very irritable in the evening; no sleep all night; and very unquiet this morning."—Auckland, ii. 292.

was hotly contested, and it was urged that Parliament alone should restore the powers it had taken away; and the plan had certainly a doubtful air, and it was certainly open to the suspicions imputed by the Opposition.

The excitement that prevailed during this struggle was extraordinary. London society was ranged in two factions, each agitated by feelings of the most vulgar kind. Everyone was to gain or lose by the issue; the Opposition rapacious for power and place, now almost within their grasp—the Government as eager to defeat them. Everywhere there was fury and acrimony, and the ladies were more inflamed than the men. At balls and parties ladies were already seen wearing “Regency caps.”

How the hungry followers of Fox and Sheridan must have been affected by the giving away the control of the household to the Queen, may be gathered from the fact that no less than one hundred and fifty places would be thus lost to them. It seemed invidious, and was certainly insulting to the Prince to lay down that he was not fit to be entrusted with such patronage; but it must be recollected that—shocking as it may seem—he and his father were on the footing of enemies, and that his father’s malady was supposed to have been induced by his unfilial treatment. On the other hand, there was an inconsistency in the argument of the Opposition, who, it will be recollected, had vehemently denied the power of the House in the matter.

But the prospect of power had its usual disintegrating effect upon the Opposition, and dissensions had broken out among the leaders. Fox, as we have seen, under pretext of illness, had retired from the fray, disgusted at the influence which Sheridan and Grey, with others of that “wing” of the party, enjoyed in the direction of the Prince’s affairs.

The Duke of Portland, Fox’s ardent friend, declared that one could take no step so long as Sheridan enjoyed the supremacy he had. Burke, too, as Mr. Moore thinks, was dissatisfied with Fox, as being too temperate. Between Sheridan and Burke there were also jealousies.* It would seem that much of Burke’s extraordinary violence and intemperance of language was prompted by the pressure of personal necessities, and of a hope deferred in the most exasperating way; and he was inclined to lay the cause of the failure, which he foresaw was at hand, to the moderate counsels of Fox.

The first care of his friends had been to lay out splendid provision for him in their plans; and when the next fit of royal lunacy came on some twenty years later, they were to be again busy allotting aerial places of the same kind, and to be again the prey of a similar illusion.

* Moore, “Life of Sheridan,” ii. 60.

In this Utopian ministry, Sheridan was to be Treasurer of the Navy. Less sanguine than might be supposed, he never accepted the prospect of office seriously, always maintaining that the King would recover. They had even sent him the plan of the rooms in the new Somerset House which he was to occupy. And when he came to hear of his disappointment, he could drink the King's health cheerfully at his own table. As to the other offices, the Duke of York was to be Commander-in-Chief; field-marshal was to be created, of which the Prince himself was to be one. Lord Spencer was to go to Ireland; Fitzpatrick to be Secretary-at-War; the Home Secretaryship lay between Lords Rawdon and Stormont.

The Prince in his cups would give away colonelcies to unqualified persons, who would insist on keeping him to his promise next day.* Lord North, now old and blind, declined office. Even the Bishopric of St. Asaph had fallen vacant, and a successor had been designated, who had received the congratulations of his friends. With these arrangements they were busy in the first weeks of February, and it was thought that the Prince would be in possession by Saturday, the 14th.† Alas! for such pleasing anticipations. For now, while in this fool's paradise, rumours of a steady change in the condition of the royal patient began to take firmer shape. Dr. Warren, to the disgust of his friends, was compelled to declare that the King was improving every day.‡ In fact, so early as the beginning of February the disorder had begun to diminish. On the 11th the King bade Warren feel his pulse, and asked him did he not think there was some amendment, to which the doctor agreed; and on the 17th certified that the King was in a state of convalescence." On the 19th the Chancellor stood up in the House and announced that it would be "indecent," in the King's state, to proceed with the bill further, and proposed to adjourn for a week. The Duke of York professed great satisfaction at the news.

In truth the Prince and his party already felt that, in vulgar phrase, "the game was up," for even if they came into office, it seemed to be settled that he could not, with the King fast recovering, dismiss the existing Ministers, who would have to be restored a week or two later. Already the Duke of Portland was

* Auckland, "Correspondence," ii. 292.

† "Life of Sir G. Elliot," i. 269.

‡ One of the Prince's good stories often told at his own expense, was the comfort brought to him by Fox's Italian servant, Basilico, who would approach him confidentially: "I have de honour, sare, to be at Windsor. I have seen your fader, and"—here the Prince would admirably mimic his air of rueful sympathy—"and he looks as well as ever."—Moore's "Diary."

said to have told the Prince that, under the circumstances, he could not take office;* nor were there other annoying elements wanting to make this "day of dupes" even more humiliating. The Irish Parliament, after some angry debates, had voted an address to the Prince, inviting him to take on him the Regency of Ireland. On February 19th the Houses waited upon the Lord-Lieutenant with a request that he would transmit it to the Prince. This he refused to do on constitutional grounds, while, after passing a vote of censure on the Lord-Lieutenant, a deputation was appointed to convey the address to London, which, unfortunately for their purpose, they did not reach until the "day after the fair," and the King all but restored. This might have brought about a dangerous conflict. "The Irish Ambassadors," as they were called, were rather unfairly assailed with gross abuse. Epigrams were showered on them for their bootless errand. The members were ridiculed in a coarse vein. At the various dinner-parties given to the deputies by the Duke of York, Sir T. Dundas, and others, the Prince devoted himself to making a favourable impression on them. At the latter's house he was "uncommonly agreeable and captivating," singing a capital sea-song, which turned on a battle between a French and English ship; the French ship sinking, and the British rescuing the crew, the burden being that "the Briton conquers but to save." This gives a good idea of his convivial gifts.

On the 27th of February, when the very bulletins had ceased to appear as unnecessary, the Prince received their address and answered it in a suitable manner:

"MY LORDS AND GENTLEMEN,

"The address from the lords spiritual and temporal, and the commons of Ireland, which you have presented to me, demands my warmest and earliest thanks. If anything could add to the esteem and affection I have for the people of Ireland, it would be the loyal and dutiful attachment to the person and government of the King my father, manifested in the address of the two Houses.

"What they have done, and their manner of doing it, is a new proof of their undiminished duty to his Majesty, of their uniform attachment to the house of Brunswick, and their constant attention to maintain inviolate the concord and connexion between the kingdoms of Great Britain and Ireland, so indispensably necessary to the prosperity, the happiness, and the liberties of both.

* "Court and Cabinets," ii. 107.

"If, in conveying my grateful sentiments on their conduct, in relation to the King my father, and to the inseparable interests of the two kingdoms, I find it impossible to express adequately my feelings on what relates to myself, I trust you will not be the less disposed to believe that I have the understanding to comprehend the value of what they have done, a heart that must remember, and principles that will not suffer me to abuse their confidence.

"But the fortunate change which has taken place in the circumstance which gave occasion to the address agreed to by the lords and commons of Ireland, induces me to delay, for a few days, giving a final answer; trusting that the joyful event of his Majesty's resuming the personal exercise of his royal authority may then render it only necessary for me to repeat those sentiments of gratitude and affection to the loyal and generous people of Ireland, which I feel indelibly impressed on my heart.

"The happy event of the King's recovery, and the consequent reassumption of the exercise of his auspicious government, announced by his royal commission for declaring the further causes of holding the Parliament of Great Britain, has done away with the melancholy necessity which gave rise to the arrangement proposed by the Parliament of Ireland; but nothing can obliterate from my memory and my gratitude the principles upon which that arrangement was made, and the circumstances by which it was attended.

"I consider your generous kindness to his Majesty's royal family, and the provision you made for preserving the authority of the crown in its constitutional energy, as the most unequivocal proof which could be given of your affectionate loyalty to the King, at the time when, by an afflicting dispensation of Providence, his government had suffered an intermission, and his house was deprived of its natural protector.

"I shall not pay so ill a compliment to the lords and commons of Ireland, as to suppose that they were mistaken in their reliance on the moderation of my views, and the purity of my intentions. A manly confidence, directing the manner of proceeding towards those who entertain sentiments becoming the high situation in which they are born, furnishes the most powerful motives to the performance of their duty; at the same time that the liberality of sentiment, which, in conveying a trust, confers an honour, can have no tendency to relax that provident vigilance, and that public jealousy which ought to watch over the exercise of power.

"Though full of joy for the event which enables me to take

leave of you in this manner, personally I cannot but regret your departure. I have had the opportunity of acquiring a knowledge of your private characters, and it has added to the high esteem which I had before entertained for you on account of your public merits; both have made you the worthy representatives of the great bodies to which you belong.

“I am confident that I need not add my earnest recommendation to Parliament and people of Ireland to continue to cultivate the harmony of the two kingdoms which, in their mutual perfect freedom, will find the closest as well as the happiest bond of their intercourse.”

On the same day they were entertained at a magnificent banquet at Carlton House, at which assisted the Dukes of York, Cumberland, and Portland; Fox (now returned), Burke, Sheridan, and all the leaders attended. The Prince exerted his most engaging arts as host, and at the close insisting on what he called the “Landlord’s Bottle,” and drew from Burke the rather solemn jest that he was entitled to order if *jure di-vino*. They spent some jovial weeks in town fêted by all the Opposition, and then returned to their own country.

CHAPTER XVII.

1789.

WHAT made these proceedings the more unbecoming was the fact that the King was actually recovered. On the 20th he had been seen by the Chancellor, who declared that he never, at any period, saw the King more composed, collected, or distinct. All accounts agree in this view, which is, moreover, supported by the minute and accurate reports of Miss Burney. They had even opened to him some of the proceedings which had taken place during his confinement—a most painful and delicate task.

Pitt, more defiant and haughty under these conditions, was not disposed to allow his enemies even the formal advantages of this position. "We shall not feel ourselves disposed," wrote Mr. Grenville, "to give up the King's authority into the hands of his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, and the less so because we know that he and his friends, as he calls them, have taken the resolution of making the change at all events, and of taking all the offices of the country into their own hands, even, as they express themselves, if they are to hold them only twelve hours." *

But the most disagreeable incident in this painful business was now to be seen. The sons were compelled by this hostile treatment to look on the announced recovery as part of their

* The same spirit was evident in the mode of treating the Irish address. "On conversing with Pitt," wrote Mr. Grenville, "we were both clearly of opinion that no communication ought to be made to his Royal Highness of what had passed in Ireland, as we have uniformly considered him as not entitled under the present circumstances to any communication of any part of the business of Government."—"Court and Cabinets," ii. 123.

enemies' "game," and possibly a deception contrived by the Queen and her "faction." On this ground they declined to believe that he had recovered, and were searching in his words and actions for evidence to the contrary. The accounts were still coloured by violent prejudice. The Chancellor had seen the King for the second time on the 20th, and declared to Pitt that there was not the least trace of the disorder. For the other party he had a different story. "By G——," he said to the Duke of York, "they always contrive to wind up the King when I am to see him, and he appears very well before me." He had told Warren to repeat to the two Princes his opinion of the King's state, which, at his first interview at least, was certainly unfavourable.*

Inflamed by this suspense and the contradictory reports, the two Princes called repeatedly at Kew, and pressed to be allowed to see their father. They were refused on various pretences; it being, no doubt, considered that they came, moved not by filial anxiety, but in the capacity of spies. At last they addressed a demand to the Queen:

"Your Majesty's most dutiful son, the Prince of Wales, most humbly begs leave to represent to your Majesty the following circumstances:

"It has for some days been confidently reported, and is generally credited, that his Majesty is happily restored to health, though that health is not yet perfectly confirmed. It must be on a supposition of this fact, that the Lord Chancellor has been introduced into his Majesty's presence.

"That the Prince of Wales, with the Duke of York, have frequently made most respectful and dutiful applications to be permitted to see the King their father; but that they have met with a refusal, on the idea that his Majesty was by no means in a condition to be approached by them, without the danger of affecting his sensibility in such a manner as to renew or increase his illness.

"They beg leave to inform your Majesty, that, in such a moment, the Prince claims a right to see his father, as a gratification due to his feelings as a son. The Prince claims access to his Majesty in right of his birth. He claims, at fitting times, and

* Even on the morning after the Chancellor's announcement to the House of Lords, when Sir G. Baker complimented the King on seeing him dressed in his usual clothes: "I wish you joy, sir, of appearing again like a king, and I am glad to see that star again." The poor patient replied, putting his finger on his mouth: "Hush, hush! don't talk of stars, we must not talk of stars; you know I am *mopsimus*, and don't like French mottoes."—Sir G. Elliot, "Life," i. 273.

with proper precautions, an audience of the King, as being actually nominated by a bill, which has passed the House of Commons, for the arduous and delicate trust of his Majesty's government during his illness.

"The rule of the Prince of Wales's conduct must, in a great measure, be formed upon an accurate idea of his Majesty's condition. He apprehends that he owes it to his Majesty, and to his Majesty's faithful subjects, to do all that in his power lies, that no man should make use of his Majesty's name whilst he labours under illness, which may redound to the detriment of his Majesty's government—which may, against his will, and by surprise, possibly tend to the dishonour and disadvantage of his family.

"Her Majesty will naturally expect that the Prince of Wales should be exceedingly anxious and apprehensive lest, if he and the Duke of York should not see the King (though they may be, against their wishes, excluded from his Majesty's presence), that circumstance might be hereafter employed by persons not well disposed to your Majesty, or to them, to prejudice his Majesty's mind against them, as deficient in reverence, duty, and natural affection.

"If it be thought that their seeing his Majesty might agitate his mind, and retard his recovery, the Prince is sure that the same reason might be urged with regard to the Chancellor, who, in his character of minister, must naturally remind the King of affairs of State, and renew in his mind the cares and anxieties of his government.

"The Prince of Wales desires and requests, as guarantees and witnesses of the prudent use which he and the Duke of York will certainly make of this visit of duty and respect, the presence of two or more of the attending physicians, provided that all persons who may operate on the King's mind by restraint be not present.

"The Prince of Wales entreats, that if the physicians should be of opinion that his Majesty's state of health will not safely permit the desired interview, the Prince, for his future justification with the King, may receive that opinion in writing, signed by them.

"The Duke of York most humbly supplicates your Majesty for the same indulgence, in paying his humble and affectionate duty to the King his father."

On the morning of the 21st they again presented themselves at Kew, and sent Drs. Warren and Gisborne to Dr. Willis, with a formal demand for admission; requiring also that the reasons for refusal should be given in writing. Willis returned with a message from his Majesty, thanking them for their inquiries;

but wishing to put off seeing them till he had seen the Chancellor, which he was to do to-morrow. This was reduced to writing and sent to them. "How it will be received I know not, but it has completely defeated the avowed object of the visit, which was to prejudice his mind against the measures which have been taken." Such was Mr. Grenville's ardent view.

Mrs. Harcourt gives a pleasant picture of the restoration: "On February 22nd," she says, "Lady C. Finch said the King showed the greatest affection to the Queen. It was the attention of a lover. He seemed to delight in making her presents—kissed her hand & showed every mark of tenderness. I was just with Lady C. when Gen^l H. came to fetch me to Mr Smelt's house saying the King was waiting to see me. I flew up stairs where I found the King & before I could speak he caught me in his arms & kissed me, which I own I did him on both sides of his face, telling him how happy I was & how I thanked God for this blessing of seeing him well, yet hardly knowing what I said so overcome was I with joy. He staid about $\frac{1}{2}$ an hour in which time he was exactly what I had ever seen him when in good spirits. He talked much of Windsor, said it was his only home, he knew no other—spoke of the great regret in quitting it. He looked very thin but was in excellent spirits, making his usual jokes & looked full of kindness & benevolence. Gen^l H. removed from the Ks. mind a prejudice as to the Queen's leaving him at Windsor before he was removed to Kew by fully explaining the plan having been so arranged by the physician & the King declared himself highly pleased & satisfied. The King & Queen afterwards came together to see me. She was dreadfully reduced & shewed me her stays, which would wrap twice over."

More touching still is Lord Carmarthen's (the Duke of Leeds) account of his first meeting with the poor King. He remained with him three hours: "The moment the door was shut the King embraced me, put his cheek to mine, and, with tears in his eyes, thanked me for my affectionate behaviour during his illness." He found him grown thin, his voice hoarse, but he appeared perfectly clear, and his conversation more connected and less hurried than it used to be. He was most grateful to all for the support he had received during his illness, and said it was no small comfort to him to reflect on the small number of those who had deserted him, and still more so as they were persons whose conduct he was not surprised at.

On the 23rd the father and his sons were to meet. The meeting was fixed for one o'clock, but the worthy pair did not arrive till half-past three. Though thus kept waiting for them, the King's mind had been fully prepared: there had been unfolded to him

the intended regency, the very day it was to have passed; Willis, with great tact, impressing on him the providential interposition which had restored him at so critical a point. The result was that he was so moved to thankfulness and pious gratitude, that he expressed himself "ready to bear any reverse or anything vexatious he might have to know." Rather strange seems the dislike he now exhibited to Mr. Pitt, chiefly, it would appear, from an idea that it was owing to his interference that he had been confined at Kew. It was more likely to have been caused by the manner in which the minister had favoured the Queen, and given over his authority to her.

Yet no one could have more chivalrously championed his master. The King said piteously to Willis that, "Had they crushed you, doctor, they would have crushed me—we must have fallen together."* The Princes, too, filled with bitterness against the man who had crushed them, gave out that as soon as they had explained matters to the King, he would see Pitt's behaviour in the worst light. At the interview that followed between the King and Mr. Pitt, full justice was done to the courageous minister who had twice rescued him from difficulties and dangers.

Advised no doubt by their friends, the Princes had thought of reconciling themselves to their father, for their position, both from debt and general discredit, had now become most critical. But the vindictive Queen jealously guarded her spouse; and the odious rôle which the sons had played was to be transferred to her. It would appear that she was determined to use the victory in the most uncompromising fashion; more particularly as there were still some strange symptoms in her recovered husband, which pointed at disturbance of the domestic peace.†

Now began a series of painful family incidents. The Princes, having at last obtained an audience, were shown up to the Queen, while Colonel Digby went to inform the King. When he came to the door he had to stop from agitation, for the tears rushed to his eyes. After a pause, he said to Colonel Digby that the house of Brunswick had to make it a rule never to shed tears. Then, entering, he took both his sons in his arms with the greatest tenderness. "He said he always loved them and always should love them," shedding tears on their faces. And they, too, were affected. "The Prince protested that it was the happiest day of his life." "The King," writes Sir G. Elliot, "did not touch at all on anything like business, but talked to the Prince about horses, and to the Duke about his regiment. The Queen was present, walking

* "Mrs. Harcourt's Diary," p. 12.

† See "Mrs. Harcourt's Diary," p. 28, for this unsuspected episode.

to and fro in the room with a countenance and manner of great dissatisfaction; and the King, every now and then, spoke to her in a submissive and soothing sort of tone. . . . He made, however, one or two 'slips,' such as telling them he was the Chancellor."

They took leave in half-an-hour, and told Colonel Digby they were delighted that the King was better, though they noted that he had made an odd remark about his "playing piquet better than Mr. Charles Hawkins."

The poor monarch's own account of the transaction, dated February 23rd, was given to Mr. Pitt. "It is with infinite satisfaction," he wrote, "that I renew my correspondence with Mr. Pitt by acquainting him with my having seen the Prince of Wales and my second son. Care was taken that the conversation should be general and cordial. They seemed perfectly satisfied. I chose the meeting should be in the Queen's apartment, that all parties might have that caution which, at the present hour, could best be judicious." It will be seen, therefore, that the Princes were maligned when the Court party set it about that they were unfeeling, as it was the King who made the conversation general. In this unfortunate contest now about to commence, the blame must be shared between the parties; but the chief share attaches to the Queen, who set herself up as the head of a faction, and, it will be seen, conducted the struggle with a venom and bitterness that challenged hostility. The young Princes, without proper advisers, smarting under disappointment and their "wrongs," were only too ready to encounter her enmity with enmity as inflamed—so that here were furnished materials for family scandal of the most indecent kind.* It shows how envenomed the Court party was when it spread abroad the report that "the Princes showed no emotion." The same authority declared that they were frequenting masquerades, "rioting, and drunk. The Duke of York plays much at tennis, and has a score with all the blacklegs, and in the public court tells them they shall all be paid as soon as his father can settle with him some of the Osnaburg money which he owes him. They amused themselves yesterday evening with spreading about a report that the King was still out of his mind, and quoting phrases to which they gave that turn: Bless God, it is yet some time before these mature and ripened virtues will be visited upon us in the form of a government."

The Queen had despatched General Harcourt to Pitt with her account of the interview, pressing him to come the next day, assuring him of the most cordial reception. Pitt acknowledged

* "Mrs. Harcourt's Diary," p. 12; "Court and Cabinets," ii. 122; "Life of Sir G. Elliot," i. 274.

the invitation with some reserve and pride, expressing a hope that the zeal of his friends was not pressing him on the King. The truth seemed to be that the faithless Chancellor was again at work,* and had seen the Prince, who had sent Adam to Fox only the day before to open some new scheme of alliance. This, however, Fox discouraged, saying that he had a horror of negotiations with Thurlow. Here is an amusing glimpse of the rough Chancellor at this time. He was convinced, he told Lord Carmarthen, they wanted to get rid of him, and complained of a want of confidence between members of the Cabinet. "Dundas was the most impudent fellow he ever knew; that he had proposed a dinner to the Chancellor at the house of the latter, with Pitt and Lord Grenville, where he (the Chancellor) was to give his opinion on the election of the sixteen Peers. The Chancellor told him he would very readily give him a dinner, but no opinion."†

In his daughters the King was blessed. Wrote one in delight at his restoration: "I cannot describe to you the joy everyone showed whenever the King came. I can assure you it was almost too much. Everywhere they sang 'God save the King.' I was greatly entertained on the day we arrived at Lyndhurst to hear a poor man say: 'I am so sorry we have no band for the King; it is so hard he has no music—he loves it so much!'"

Of the Princess Royal at this time Mrs. Harcourt thus speaks: After declaring that her disposition was such that she had not an enemy in the world, she goes on: "Her apprehension is quick. Her conduct in the difficult situation she has been placed in by being ever distinguished with marked affection by her Brothers, especially the Prince, has been uniformly creditable to her Judgment. She writes with an ease and fluency which renders her letters singularly entertaining. I have heard Miss Goldsworthy compare them to Mad. de Sevigné's. Her desire is ever to be a peace-maker—and if she can procure pleasure to others, it is the greatest delight she knows. Princess Augusta adores her parents; but tho' she is ever fulfilling her duty she is a less marked character, tho' I cannot exactly define why, than the Pss. Royal. Princess Elizth again is quite different from her two Elder Sisters. She has great good humour, quick feelings, a great deal of genius, an Imagination full of fire, much resolution, much presence of mind, the same surprising Memory which runs through the family, very strong affections and

* "The Chancellor is again getting about the Prince, persuading him that he is attached to him and that he hates Pitt; but he is the falsest and most treacherous character in the world."—Sir G. Elliot, i. 275.

† Leeds MS.

friendship, high principles, and a manner which, from its superlative good humour, pleases everyone. She has a turn for conversation and a peculiarity of Ideas, which is just entitled to be called wit. She writes as she speaks, often full of humorous conceits, and she has the power of defending and supporting her own opinions in presence of the Queen in a manner her Sisters cannot attempt. I ought rather to say a manner which the P^{ss} Royal dares not, and the P^{ss} Augusta does not wish to attempt. Of the Beauty of the 3 Princesses people think differently, though all agree that they have a considerable share. P^{ss} Royal is the finest woman, P^{ss} Augusta the prettiest, and P^{ss} Eliz. the handsomest."

PRINCESS AUGUSTA TO MISS GOLDSWORTHY.

20th Feb.

"I have the pleasure, my dearest Gooly, of telling you we had the happiness of a Visit from my dear Papa. Last night he came up stairs at 7 and staid till $\frac{1}{2}$ past 9. Thank God my dearest Gooly, for this Comfort. Thank God for his great mercy to us. I am so very happy that I really could hardly beleive my eyes when I saw him: he was so composed, so kind, so exactly what you and all our real friends could wish. The Gentlemen below declared they never saw him better than when he quitted us, and he has had a Charming night of 7 hours sleep. Your most affect. my dearest Gooly

"AUGUSTA SOPHIA."

"The P^{ss} Augusta and the D. of Y.," adds Mrs. Harcourt, "was now continually with the Qⁿ endeavouring to regain her favour & trying to obtain it for the Prince. The Queen said there were parts of his conduct she could never forget, & instanced his setting Sheridan to answer her letters. The King had related this to Mr. Digby & said tears were shed on both sides. But the King looked to amendment of conduct not declarations.

"P^{ss} Royal told me the P. of Wales had won money of the D. of Bedford at Newmarket & upon the Course as they were riding about he called out to the Duke, You know it don't signify what you lose to me as your Brother-in-law, on which the D. of Orleans said, Qu'est que c'est que ça que vous lui dites là? Je l'appelle (said the Prince) mon beau-frère.—Qu'est que ça veut dire; est-ce que la Fitzherbert a une Sœur?—Non, non (said the Prince), il est l'amant de ma Sœur aîné, il en est folle.

"Dr. Willis had now prepared the King's mind. He said he had told the K. of the intended Regency & what day it was to have finally passed. That he was struck as he ought with the mercy of God, who had restored him at so critical a juncture, & that he expressed

unfeigned Gratitude to the Divine author of all Good. Said he felt so impressed with it, & with such perfect resignation to the will of him who had afflicted him, that he could bear any reverse or any thing vexatious he might have to know, as under such circumstances he ought to bear it.

“He told his Majesty the great part Mr Pitt had acted & his obligations to him. The King told Mr Smelt afterwards he would rather have been obliged to the Nation and next to the Nation to his Fred^k than to any Individual, but he seemed on the whole reconciled to Mr Pitt, anxious to see him & likely to receive him kindly.”

Yet Dr. Willis was much dissatisfied with the remuneration offered to him for his great services. He complained of coldness on the part of the King. “He only now learnt that he was to be rewarded with £1000 a-year for 20 years—£500 a-year for the life of Dr John. Tom Willis was to have his Expenses p^d & to be provided for in the Church. Dr W. allowance was to be from the King’s purse not from Parl^t.” The other Physicians had their Expenses paid as follows :

Dr. Geo. Baker	.	.	.	.	.	£13,000
Dr. Warren	.	.	.	.	.	1,000
Reynolds	.	.	.	.	.	900
Pepys & Gisburne	.	.	.	.	.	700

Dr. John Willis, when eighty years of age, and some forty or fifty years after the transaction, was still complaining (to Mr. Julian Young) of Mr. Pitt’s having broken his promises.

CHAPTER XVIII.

1789.

On February 26th the King again saw his favourite son, "his Frederick," to whom he would rather be obliged, he said to Mr. Pitt, than to any one, and received from him the keys of his papers, jewels, etc. The King received them with many expressions of delight, which the young Prince told and reported as evidence of his insane state.*

His pitiless German mother was determined not to let father and sons be reconciled. Almost at the first opportunity the Prince had given her a number of papers to be laid before the King, which included his correspondence with Pitt, and an explanation of his own behaviour. On the 5th of March, having received no answer, he wrote to know if she had delivered his documents, and pressed for an interview with his father. "The Queen sent him some excuse," writes Sir Gilbert Elliot, "for not answering that day (not choosing, in fact, to give an answer till she could see the Chancellor next morning); accordingly, yesterday the Prince received her answer, that she had mentioned the matter to the King, but that he had not asked to see him. The request for an interview she did not notice. The Duke of York seems to have been always admitted, amusing himself by describing his father's conversation, saying it was made up of childish remarks, or rational, with occasional instances of singularity."

On one occasion, however (March 4th), when the Duke tried to

* He kissed them, and said: "My dear key! my favourite key!" which even Sir G. Elliot, carried away by the distortion of party, declared "was perfectly unlike sound reason in anybody." The Duke had, of course, given this account at the headquarters of the Opposition.

obtain admittance, he was met by Dr. Willis, who declared that it was improper that he should see the King. On which the young Prince lost his temper, and threatened to knock him down if he dared to oppose him. "Dr. Willis then besought permission to apprise the Queen of the visit. To this the Duke consented, stipulating that the doctor should not be present at the interview, which his royal highness declared should take place. The Queen then hastened to the King's apartment, and the Duke was admitted. His royal highness did not depart with favourable impressions of the King's state; he scrupled not to declare, that he thought his Majesty very deficient in mental powers, and that he believed something like fatuity had succeeded to irritation. On Thursday, the 12th, the Duke of York visited his Majesty, whom he found carefully examining a great number of spectacles, and selecting with peculiar care some which he said were for his dear Eliza. To change the conversation, the Duke informed his Majesty that he had three desertions from his regiment. The King, impatient of the interruption, broke out into violent abuse of the Duke and his regiment, and became so perturbed, that the Queen was obliged to command the attendance of Dr. Willis. On his appearance, the storm instantly subsided; his Majesty became quite composed: he talked of an intention to visit Germany; told the Duke that he should send over a curricule and six small greys, and drive the Queen and himself through that country."

On March 7th, a letter was written and sent to the Prince from the Queen enclosing one from the King to her, in which he virtually declined to see his sons, on the ground of avoiding all business and agitation. How wrong the Queen was all through this transaction may be fairly gathered from her behaviour later on, when her son was engaged in his quarrel with Colonel Lenox.

On which the Prince of Wales addressed the following letter to the Queen, the draft of which is corrected and the date annexed in the handwriting of Mr. Fox:

THE PRINCE OF WALES TO THE QUEEN.

"Carlton House, March 9th, 1789.

"MADAM,

"The contents of your Majesty's note were really of too much importance, and of too painful a nature, for me to return an immediate answer. I have shown them to my brother, whose sentiments agree entirely with mine, and who feels as I do the distressing alternative that is offered us, of leaving our conduct unexplained to the King, or of obtruding upon him a discussion

which may have the effect of agitating him too much. In this situation, however, we do not hesitate to sacrifice everything to our tenderness for his Majesty, and do not desire he should be further troubled upon our account at present. We have too lively an impression of what they have to answer for, who have brought or suffered others to bring business before the King at a time when all agitation is improper, to be guilty of anything liable to a similar construction. But I trust we shall be permitted to represent to your Majesty a few facts and circumstances relative to the peculiarity of our situation, with the truth of which you are perfectly well acquainted. I conceived myself to have a promise from your Majesty that the papers which I had sent you should be given the King at the first moment of his being in a proper state to attend to business. Relying upon this promise, I thought myself authorised to disbelieve all the reports which the Ministers had so industriously circulated, of their having laid business before his Majesty, and explained to him what had passed during his illness. But when the Chancellor and Mr. Pitt made their respective declarations in the two Houses of Parliament last Thursday, I could not but suppose there had been some truth in what I had before treated as idle rumour, and wrote to your Majesty in consequence.

“Feeling as my brother and I do for the King’s quiet and repose, we consider the answer sent to us as a prohibition with respect to any present explanation of our conduct; and thus, instead of having the preference, to which we had so just a claim, and which we were induced to expect, we dare not even attempt to counteract the impressions which our enemies, who have daily access to the King, may have given of the part we took in the late important occurrences. Your Majesty must surely be of opinion that this state of things is neither decent nor just, and that whoever is responsible for what passed at Kew since the King’s convalescence, has much indeed to answer for. I forbear to say anything more upon this painful subject, nor should I have said so much, if I had not thought that I owed to my brother and myself to make your Majesty this true representation of these peculiar hardships of our situation.

“I am,” etc.

The draft of another note, says Lord Russell, in the handwriting of the Prince himself, without date, but manifestly written on this occasion, deserves insertion, because it shows what were his spontaneous feelings and surmises on this extraordinary refusal of a father to listen to the vindication of his children.

THE PRINCE OF WALES TO THE QUEEN.

“MADAM,

“The contents of your Majesty’s note were really of too much consequence and of too painful a nature for me to return an immediate answer, before I had first seen my brother, and consulted with him whether he saw in the same point of view and with the same regret what appeared to me a prohibition on y^t just claim we both conceived we had on the paternal goodness and affection of his Majesty, and w^h, we are confident, w^d have induced his Majesty to have furnished us with the earliest opportunity of informing him of what had passed, and of explaining and justifying our own conduct, if the interested advice of some persons desirous of sowing dissension between our father and ourselves, and of concealing the truth from him, had not interfered. Under this impression, we have taken the liberty of writing to his Majesty; and we wait the result of our letter with y^e most anxious impatience, still confiding y^t, with y^e assistance of your Majesty’s gracious and affectionate endeavours, we may be favoured with the opportunity of communication with him, w^h, tho’ denied to us, has been granted to others, who neither by affection, duty, or blood, are attached to his Majesty as we are. With the most respectful submission, I have y^e honour to subscribe myself, Madam,

“Your Majesty’s,” etc.*

On March 10th, the Houses met to address his Majesty. The King was still represented by the commission; so that even here there was an embarrassment. How was the King’s recovery to be officially known? From what point did it date? Who was entitled to say he was recovered? There was talk of an examination by the physicians; but all were eager not to raise difficulties. But even here the family rancour intruded; and Lord Radnor heard that the Duke of York had positively determined to have made a motion, the day previous to the address, tending to show that the King was still in a state of insanity; but, having felt his ground, he dropped the thought.† This scarcely seems credible.

In the Lower House, Fox, on the address being moved, proposed another to the Prince, who, he said, was also entitled to congratulation on the manner in which he had behaved during the crisis; but this was put aside.

Then followed jubilations and festivities. As the King returned to Kew from Windsor, he was greeted, Mrs. Harcourt says, with bursts of joy. At night the City was illuminated. The King of

* “Correspondence of Charles James Fox,” v. 305.

† Auckland, “Correspondence,” ii. 306.

France ordered his ambassador to give a fête. "But those about the Court were very uneasy at the King's hurried manner, and the captious temper which he betrayed, evidently produced by the unusual bustle and the premature intercourse with the public." He was full of all kinds of plans for travelling, building, etc.

About the 17th, Lord Chesterfield waited on the Queen with an invitation from the gentlemen of White's Club, which proposed giving the royal family a ball, in honour of the King's recovery. The Court itself proposed some festivities, and it will now be seen what rancour was imported into these gaities, and how the narrow vindictiveness of a German court was suffered to direct all the proceedings that followed—which offers, perhaps, the best excuse for the behaviour of the Prince.

The illuminations were of the most spontaneous kind, and extended even into the suburban districts. The whole country seemed ablaze with lights. The reckless Princes, whose good-humour and love of enjoyment never flagged, took what pleasure they could out of the festival.

"On the day of the illumination the Princes dined with the Irish deputies at Lord Hertford's," writes Sir G. Elliot. 'The Prince and the Duke of York went away together in the Prince's coach, and were going to the opera. In some of the narrow streets the coach was stopped by other carriages, and the mob soon knew the Princes. They called, 'God save the King!' while the Prince, letting down his glasses, joined them in calling very heartily, and hallooed, 'Long live the King,' and so forth with the mob. But one man called out to him to cry, 'Pitt for ever! or God bless Pitt!' The Prince said he would not; but called out, 'Fox for ever, and God bless Fox!' The man and, I believe, some others began to insist on his saying, 'Pitt for ever;' and I believe he said, 'Damn Pitt—Fox for ever!' on which a man pulled the coach-door open, and the Prince endeavoured to jump out amongst them in order to defend himself; but the Duke of York kept him back with one arm, and with the other struck the man on the head, and called to the coachman to drive on, which he did at a great pace, the coach-door flapping about as they went; and so they got to the opera. From the opera the Prince, accompanied by some of his friends, among whom was Tom Pelham, would walk to Carlton House; and from thence he chose also to walk abroad the streets to see the illuminations. But they persuaded him first to call at Brookes'. They accordingly made their way on foot through the crowd along Pall Mall. He was soon known, but not insulted; and several people called, 'God bless your Highness!' which he

was much pleased with. They also called, 'Long live the King!' which he always joined in as loud as any of them. At St. James' he fell in with a gang of butchers, with marrow-bones and cleavers, who knew him, and began immediately to play before him; and he found it impossible to get rid of them. They accordingly cleared the way for him, playing and shouting all the way up St. James' Street. When they came to Brookes', they gave him three cheers; and the Prince in return hallooed out, 'Long live the King!' and gave them three cheers himself. He then sent them ten guineas to drink. He heard at the same time that Lord Charlemont and another Irish deputy were on the other side of the street, and could not get across; on which he gave to the chairmen nine guineas to help them across. From Brookes' Pelham persuaded him to order his coach and go home, which he did."

This spirit was admired, and there was wonder expressed that he had not the good luck to be exceedingly popular. Still striving to obtain access to his father, he found himself frustrated by his mother, with whom he had an angry altercation on the subject. "The Prince of Wales," says Sir G. Elliot, "has had a smart tussle with the Queen, in which they came to strong and open declarations of hostility. He told her that she had connected herself with his enemies, and had entered into plans for destroying and disgracing him and all her children, and that she countenanced misrepresentations of his conduct to the King, and prevented the explanations he wished to give. She was violent and lost her temper; and the conversation ended, I believe, by her saying that she would not be the channel of anything that either he or the Duke of York had to say to the King, and that the King did not mind what either he or the Duke of York either did or said or thought."

The enthusiasm was setting fast in favour of the recovered monarch.

"I have never seen a greater crowd at the Court, so great that I was never within a room of the Queen. All the women, with only two or three exceptions, had caps with 'God save the King!' on them—our ladies as well as the others. All of us went to court.

"The King is in London to-day—I believe for the first time since his illness. He persists in going to St. Paul's, although every means have been tried to dissuade him." *

"Inflamed by these exciting scenes the Queen carried her

* Sir G. Elliot, v. 288.

hostility still further. It was proposed to give a concert and entertainment at Windsor, on April 2nd, in return for the sympathy that had been displayed. To this the Princes received no invitation; and it almost seemed that the injudicious Queen had determined to exclude them. She sent for the Duke of York, and delivered to him a message from the King. 'I am commissioned by the King to acquaint the Prince of Wales and you that there is to be a concert here on Thursday next, to which you will be very welcome, if you like to come; but it is right to tell you that it is given to those who have supported us through the late business, and therefore you may possibly not choose to be present.*' The Duke of York tried to laugh the thing off, and said, 'Then it is given to the whole nation, for all parties have supported the King according to their different opinions of his interests.†' But the Queen would not let him off so, and said, 'No, no; I don't choose to be misunderstood. I mean expressly that we have asked the ministers, and those persons, in short, who have voted in Parliament for the King and me.'

"The Duke of York was amazingly angry, as you may suppose, and said that he did not understand the sort of distinction attempted to be made; that his brother and himself did not yield to any person in the kingdom for loyalty and affection for the King; and since this sort of distinction was to be made, he should certainly not come to the concert. He added, however, that he should inform the Prince of Wales, who would act as he chose. The Prince of Wales and the Duke of York were both in a violent rage on this attack of the Queen, which charged them in plain words with being enemies to the King; and they were for sending strong letters or papers of remonstrance and justification to the King and to the Queen. The Duke of York came to Burke about it, who went to Carlton House, and was very much of the Prince's mind for strong measures, and for an open and explicit explanation. But he advised the Prince to consult his friends first. It was accordingly agreed to assemble some of his friends the next morning, and I was sent for with the rest. The Duke of Portland, to whom Burke went overnight, was very much against any strong measures. I thought it more important to keep the King's house open to the Princes, and to avoid any rupture which might furnish an opportunity for excluding them, than to make their justification at present. It was agreed to support this opinion. It turned out, on the testimony of Colonel

* Textual, for her son wrote her words down.

† Even the maids of honour, excepting Miss Brudenell, who had shown her loyalty, were punished, and told they would not be invited.—Auckland, "Correspondence."

Goldsworthy, who was by when the King spoke on the matter to the Queen, that the good monarch said that, 'As a matter of course, his sons were to be considered as invited to everything.' So that the rest was an addition of the Queen's."

After many councils a letter of a rather conciliatory character was accordingly written by the Duke of York, as follows:

"MADAM,

"Having delivered, according to your Majesty's orders, your message to my brother, I lose no time in acquainting your Majesty, that, anxious as we are [and we trust have ever shown ourselves, both in our public and private conduct] to seize every opportunity of testifying our warmest and most dutiful affection and attention to his Majesty, we beg your Majesty to believe that we cannot allow any circumstance whatever to debar us from the happiness of paying our duty to the King [when he is so good as to permit it], and that we shall have the highest pleasure in attending his Majesty at the concert on Thursday."*

The King, however, according to Mrs. Harcourt, had desired to see the list of divisions in the House of Commons, in order to exclude those who had deserted him in his affliction.† The Opposition declared that he was watched "like a prisoner, and never out of sight of one or other of the head keepers."

The fête was a grand demonstration. It was given in St. George's Hall, and attended by all the first people in the kingdom. The ladies all wore "garter blue," a party colour. The Prince and the Duke of York, it was noticed, hardly spoke a word to any of the royal family; the Princess Royal declaring "that he had never been kind to her, but she did not care for that, so long as he was respectful to her parents."‡ The King was remarkably attentive and kind to the Princes; the Queen quite the contrary, and, it is said, appeared sour and glum at the King's behaviour to them. Before the place at which the Chancellor sat at supper there was some device in which his arms were introduced, with a motto alluding to the support given by him to the King. Before Pitt there was a Fame supporting Pitt's arms and the number 268, the first majority in the House of Commons, written in sugar-plums or sweetmeats. At the concert the music had most of it some allusion to politics. All this is quite new at Court, and most excessively indecent, as the King is always expected to be of no party, and it is an unconstitutional thing that he should even express openly either favour

* The sentences in brackets were added by Sir Gilbert Elliot.

† "Diary," p. 23.

‡ Ibid. p. 15.

or disfavour on account of any vote in Parliament. But it smells very strongly of the petticoat, or rather of breeches under petticoats.”* At this party there was high play, and Payne won £1000 at faro. This game was now in high fashion, and four ladies, namely, Lady Archer, Lady Elizabeth Luttrell, Mrs. Strutt, and Mrs. Hobart, kept banks at their houses, which was found to be a most profitable venture.

But the ball given by White’s Club at the Pantheon was to offer yet another display of these animosities. The Prince, it was stated, sent round to his friends to desire that they would not attend it, though a number of tickets were sent to him and his brother. These the royal pair contemptuously sent to “Hookham’s Library” to be sold to anyone that would buy them! To meet this the stewards required that the recipient’s name should be written on the tickets. They were then sold with the Duke’s name attached. At this fête there were the most extravagant demonstrations of loyalty, the whole company singing “God save the Queen!” Dr. Willis was the observed of all, and literally “mobbed.” He supped beside Mr. Pitt and the Duchess of Gordon, and seemed “all but mad and out of himself with transport.” And now Brookes’s Club followed, rather *malgré*, it may be assumed, with another fête on the 21st, and the Court ladies gave out they would not attend it, as a rebuke to the Opposition ladies for abstaining from White’s. The 23rd of April, the day of the ceremonial of the King’s going to St. Paul’s to return thanks for his recovery, was not allowed to pass without angry feelings. It was really an affecting display from the delight and loyalty of the crowds, the genuine gratitude of the royal family, the sobbing Princesses, the composure of the so lately afflicted patient.

But our Princes, who were obliged to form part of the show, according to an ardent courtier, Lord Bulkeley, “behaved in such an indecent manner as was quite shocking.” It does not appear that they did more than “talk to each other during the whole time of the service”—an irreverence they probably displayed on other pious occasions. On the road to and from the Cathedral the demonstration naturally took the shape of rival demonstrations, and it was noted that near Carlton House the King was coldly received, and the Prince warmly; but in the City there was the loudest acclamations for the King, which was said to have put the Prince out of temper. On the return of the procession, when the guards were drawn up before the palace to salute the King and his family, who were at the windows, with a

* Sir G. Elliot, ii. 300.

feu de joie, it was declared that the Prince had gone off at the head of a mob, his cook, Weltjie, leading the applause, with the hope of drawing away attention from the King.* The truth was the Prince had hurried home to get on his uniform, and, taking the command of his regiment, proceeded to meet his father and escort him home. At the door he led him in with what was considered by some observers the most affectionate manner. Through all this everyone must acquit the poor harassed King, whose condition required the most delicate soothing. The policy of an affectionate wife would surely have been to let the past and all that was connected with it be forgotten; but family quarrels, etc. were terribly agitating for a person in the King's condition. When, early in June, the Duke of York congratulated him on his good looks, and said everyone was struck by them, he replied in private: "What does that signify when I feel myself that I am very ill?" He complained of weakness, and that riding agitated him so much that he was obliged to give it up. To his sons he was one day harsh, the next tender and affectionate. The conclusion was that he was kept in subjection by the Queen, and forced to behave in this fashion—indemnifying himself by exhibiting his affection to them.

It is not difficult to suggest a reason for this behaviour; at least, it was not unnatural that the Opposition faction should do so. It seemed probable that the King would relapse, and that she would use the first opportunity for seizing either the regency or as much power as she could. For the mistakes that had been made during the last crisis in not securing greater power was now evident to her; or, if he continued in his present nervous condition, she might at least secure the chief direction. In either of these courses there was rather a selfish disregard of the interest of the hapless patient.

* "Court and Cabinets," ii. 153.

CHAPTER XIX.

1789.

BUT all this bad feeling was now to culminate in the scandalous duel fought between two members of the respective factions: one, no other than the Duke of York, representing the Prince's side; the other, Colonel Lenox, the Champion of the Court. Sir Gilbert Elliot gives the fullest and most accurate account of this strange transaction.

“Mr. Lenox (he writes on May 30) had been amusing himself all this winter with abusing and insulting the Prince of Wales and the Duke of York in the most scurrilous and blackguard way, both behind their backs and sometimes to their faces. It was the more blackguard in Lenox as he lived a good deal with both the Princes, and was, indeed, for some time, hardly ever out of the Duke of York's house, whom he bored extremely. Lenox, you know, was graciously forced into the Duke of York's regiment, against the rules, or at least common practice, of the army, over all the officers' heads, and without so much as an intimation to the Duke, who was the colonel. This made a great noise in the army, and particularly in the Guards, and most particularly in the Coldstream regiment, which is the Duke of York's. The Duke remonstrated, and took the natural steps for a colonel in such a situation, but without effect, and always without any personal reflections on Lenox, but, on the contrary, with great personal civility towards him. When Lenox was fairly in possession, the Duke of York said to him that though he certainly disapproved of the measure by which he had come into the regiment as prejudicial to the service and offensive to himself as colonel, and had done what he thought his duty in opposing it,

that yet he was very glad the thing had happened in the case of Mr. Lenox, whom, considering the thing merely in a personal view, he was very happy to have in his regiment. To this gentlemanlike and conciliatory speech Mr. Lenox answered that it was the King's pleasure he should be there, and that was enough for him. I mention this to show the sort of man. Some time after this, Lenox was abusing the Princes and talking offensive language about them and their friends in the presence of the Duke of York at D'Aubigné's Club, when St. Leger said that it was very odd he always chose to say these things to persons who could not resent them. Why don't you say them to some of us who can answer you? This was the substance. I don't know the terms or the strength of the language in which St. Leger expressed himself. To this Lenox made no answer, and took no notice of it. The Duke of York, it seems, said afterwards to somebody (I don't know who or on what occasion) that Lenox had submitted to language which a gentleman ought not to bear. Lenox, hearing of this, went to the Duke of York on the parade and asked him whether he had not said so, desiring an explanation. The Duke of York acknowledged having said so, but said that was not a proper place for explanation on such a subject. After the parade he went to the orderly-room, and there Lenox renewed the subject in the presence of the officers of the regiment, requiring the Duke of York to inform him what the words were to which he alluded, and who had spoken them. The Duke of York refused to tell him either, because it would be pointing out a quarrel to him, and said there was no occasion for it, as the words were spoken to Mr. Lenox himself, and he must therefore be as well acquainted with them as anybody. Lenox said this laid him under a great hardship, as he was not conscious of any language having been used which he ought to resent, and as the Duke of York refused to inform him of the person who had used it; adding that the Duke of York was his colonel and the King's son, which placed them on an unequal footing, and made it impossible for him to have satisfaction, as he might in another case. The Duke desired that he would waive those circumstances, and consider him on this occasion exactly as he would any other gentleman. This Lenox declared he could not do, and so they parted. The next thing Lenox did was to write a circular letter, dated May 18th, to all the members of the Club, desiring them to inform him if they had heard any language which he ought to resent.

“SIR,

“A report having been spread that the Duke of York had said, “Some words had been made use of to me, in a political

conversation, that no gentleman ought to submit to," I, on the first opportunity, spoke to his royal highness before the officers of the Coldstream regiment, to which I have the honour to belong: his answer was, "That he heard them said to me at D'Aubigné's"; but he positively refused to tell me the expression, or the person who had used it. In this situation, being perfectly ignorant what his royal highness can allude to, and not being aware that any such an expression ever passed, I cannot find any better mode of clearing up this matter, than by writing a letter to every member of D'Aubigné's Club, desiring each of them to let me know if he can recollect any expression to have been used in his presence, which could bear the construction put upon it by his royal highness, and, in such case, by whom the expression was used. If any such expression should occur to your memory (as you must be conscious of the disagreeable situation in which I am placed), I trust and hope you will take the earliest opportunity of stating it to me. If no such expression occurs to your memory, I would not give you the trouble of an answer, which I should else hope to receive before this day se'nnight.

" ' I have the honour to be, Sir,
 " ' Your most obedient humble Servant,
 " ' C. LENOX. ' "

" You will see it in the papers. He received no satisfaction from this measure. As he had heard it himself, nobody thought themselves bound to tell him what he ought to resent. Some of the answers were in a taunting and insulting style. St. Leger's was in substance that he kept no account of club conversation, but that if he had said anything to Mr. Lenox which he wished for satisfaction for, he was ready at all times to give it him.

" Colonel Lenox not having received any satisfactory answer to his requisition, sent a written message to the Duke, to this purport:—' That not being able to recollect any occasion on which words had been spoken to him at D'Aubigné's, to which a gentleman ought not to submit, he had taken the step which appeared to him most likely to gain information of the words to which his royal highness had alluded, and of the persons who had used them; that none of the members of the Club had given him information of any such insult being in their knowledge, and therefore he expected, in justice to his character, that his royal highness should contradict the report as publicly as he had asserted it.'

" After receiving these unsatisfactory answers, Lenox sent a challenge to the Duke of York by Lord Winchelsea; and you

saw the result in the papers. The Duke of York had a very narrow escape; and Mr. Lenox had so much an intention to kill him, that Lord Winchelsea's carriage, with post-horses, trunks, and imperials, was in waiting at hand during the duel."

The Duke (says another account), who was then residing at Carlton House, took the utmost care to keep the matter a secret from his brother the Prince of Wales, and the only person he consulted upon it was Lord Rawdon, who, painful and delicate as the commission was, could not, in point of honour, refuse to accept the dangerous office of second to his royal highness. The same caution was observed on the following morning, which was the 26th of May, when the Duke, to prevent inquiry, left his own hat at Carlton House, and took one belonging to a domestic. The two seconds issued the following statement, which contains the official account of the duel:

"In consequence of a dispute already known to the public, his Royal Highness the Duke of York, attended by Lord Rawdon, and Lieutenant-Colonel Lenox, accompanied by the Earl of Winchelsea, met at Wimbledon Common. The ground was measured at twelve paces, and both parties were to fire at a signal agreed upon. The signal being given, Lieutenant-Colonel Lenox fired, and the ball grazed his royal highness's curl. The Duke of York did not fire. Lieutenant-Colonel Lenox observed that his royal highness had not fired: Lord Rawdon said it was not the Duke's intention to fire; his royal highness had come out upon Lieutenant-Colonel Lenox's desire, to give him satisfaction, and had no animosity against him. Lieutenant-Colonel Lenox pressed that the Duke of York should fire, which was declined, upon a repetition of the reason. Lord Winchelsea then went up to the Duke of York, and expressed his hope that his royal highness would have no objection to say he considered Lieutenant-Colonel Lenox as a man of honour and courage. His royal highness replied that he should say nothing; he had come out to give Lieutenant-Colonel Lenox satisfaction, and did not mean to fire at him: if Lieutenant-Colonel Lenox was not satisfied, he might fire again. Lieutenant-Colonel Lenox said he could not possibly fire again at the Duke, as his royal highness did not mean to fire at him. On this both parties left the ground. The seconds think it proper to add, that both parties behaved with the most perfect coolness and intrepidity.

"RAWDON.

"WINCHELSEA."

Two letters were sent off express to town, one to the Prince

of Wales, and the other to the Duke of Cumberland, giving them an account of the proceedings. At the instant of his brother's return, the Prince set out for Windsor, lest rumour should have given his parents an incorrect and exaggerated narrative of the business.

"Jack Payne," Sir Gilbert Elliot resumes, "told me yesterday of the manner in which the business was received by the King and Queen. Observe, in the first place, that the second who carried the challenge, and went out with Lenox, is a Lord of the King's Bedchamber, son of Lady Charlotte Finch, who is in the Queen's family. While the duel was going on, the Prince of Wales was walking about in the yard at Carlton House, in great agitation. The Duke of York brought the account himself, and only said, 'Brother, it is all over, and all is quite well; but I have no time to tell you particulars, for I must go to the tennis-court.' On which the Prince wished the tennis-court at the bottom of the sea, and made the Duke of York relate what had passed."

Though the Duke of York's conduct may appear to have been ungenerous in his refusal of explanations before and at the meeting, it must be considered that he was resenting the abuse of himself and his brother, which the Court champion indulged in. To those of the present generation this episode will seem amazing. Everything connected with it shows that it was owing to the enmity of the factions. It would hardly be supposed that this fury would have been directed against a young Prince of the Blood, and that a subject would have deliberately sought to take the life of one in so high a station. That Colonel Lenox was deliberately "set on" by the Court faction, as it was stated by the Opposition, is incredible; yet, from the subsequent adoption of the aggressor by the Court, it would almost seem to be true. Such was their passion that the Court at once took up his cause against the Prince. The Duke, it was admitted, behaved, according to the code of duelling, with much spirit and courage; and it was clearly believed he was acting as the champion of his brother's cause. Can it be wondered at that it was believed that the Court looked with favour on this attempt to take the life of the Duke, when we read of the extraordinary behaviour of the Queen?

Once more the lively Sir Gilbert shall recount what gossip he picked up on the subject:

"As soon as the Prince of Wales had learnt the particulars, he set off for Kew with the Duke of Clarence, and sent up a message to the King by Colonel Goldsworthy, that he wished to speak to the King immediately for five minutes, and that he

wished the King to be alone. Colonel Goldsworthy delivered the message to the King, who said: 'Very well, very well; but I want just to go up to the Queen first.' The Prince was accordingly admitted to the King, Queen, and Princesses. He said he had something particular to say, and wished that the Princesses might not be present. They retired, and he then related to the King and Queen the previous circumstances which led to the duel, and turned about to the Queen and said: 'Madam, you know I acquainted you with these circumstances a week ago,' (which he had done in the view of having the thing stopped by authority). The King said: 'Ay, indeed! I never heard a word of it before.' The Prince then related what had passed in the duel, and when he mentioned the circumstance of the ball having passed through the curls, the King gave a shudder and made a little noise expressive of terror, which was the only mark of sensibility on the occasion which he ventured to show. The Queen heard it all with perfect composure, and without the slightest expression of feeling or agitation. She stood looking out at window; and when the Prince had told the story, the way in which she expressed her tenderness on the occasion was to say immediately that she understood it was all the Duke of York's own fault, and that, according to her account of the matter, he had showed more anxiety to fight Mr. Lenox than Mr. Lenox had to fight him. The Prince of Wales on this answered that she must have been very much misinformed, and that if she considered the circumstances he was sure she must allow her account was extremely improbable, because if a man was very desirous of fighting another, it was not likely that he should refrain voluntarily from firing at him, and that nobody was very anxious to go out merely for the pleasure of being fired at himself.

"This interview ended without anything being said by the King or Queen, either of approbation of his conduct or joy at his safety, or any other expression of feeling, or any notice of the Duke of York at all. The Duke of Clarence was not admitted. The day before yesterday the Duke of York went himself to the King and Queen. He saw the King first alone, who was excessively affected and showed the strongest marks of agitation and tenderness for him on this occasion; but what is remarkable is, that the door being ajar, and the Queen in the next room, the King stole gently to the door and shut it to, that he might not be seen or overheard in these expressions of natural affection. When the Queen came in she took no notice at all of the transaction, good or bad."

Later he had the whole description of the scene from the Prince of Wales himself.

“June 2, 1789.

“The account I had from Jack Payne, which I sent you, is pretty right. She has never yet said once that she was glad the Duke of York was not killed; not once so much as that. When the Duke of York went to the King the first time after the duel, I told you of the King having behaved with great feeling and affection. The Queen, on the contrary, did not say one word to him on the subject; and the first and only thing she said was, ‘Did you think Boodle’s ball full last night?’ At the French ambassador’s ball she not only received Mr. Lenox very graciously, but afterwards, when there was no occasion for it, kissed her fan to him half the length of the room two or three times, taking pains to mark her favour as conspicuously as she could.”

On May the 31st, when the Duke and Lady Charlotte Finch were with her, she did nothing but inquire about Lord Winchelsea, and how he was and what he was doing, affecting to a particular interest in him, which, considering he had been second to Colonel Lenox, was scarcely an agreeable topic for her son. What inflamed this rage was the fact that the Duke of Richmond, Colonel Lenox’s father, had deserted the Opposition during the Regency debates. The son of Colonel Lenox, who still lives, relates that the Prince made a sneering remark to the effect that “the Lenoxes don’t fight,”* which was of course repeated. These bitter lines are found in the *Rolliad*:

When thy rash arm designed her favourite dead,
The Christian triumphed and the mother fled.
No rage indignant shook her pious frame,
No partial doting swayed the saintlike dame;
But spurned and scorned where honour’s sons resort,
Her friendship soothed thee in thy mother’s court.

That this account of the mother’s behaviour was no partial one will be seen from the passages in the letter to the King, in which her eldest son bitterly complains of her conduct.† A more extraordinary indictment of a queen by her son, and addressed to his father, could not be produced.

* “Reminiscences,” i. 7. *

† Mrs. Harcourt, who was *à secretis* at the Court, well expresses the view taken of the duel there when she says “it was owing to the cruel insult offered to Colonel Lenox. The Duke of York’s whole conduct greatly lowered him among his friends.”—“Diary,” p. 26.

“The very extraordinary and, I believe, unparalleled event which has lately taken place between my brother, the Duke of York, and a private gentleman, an officer in his regiment, and a person nearly connected with one of your Majesty’s Cabinet ministers, furnishes me, unfortunately, with too much matter on this subject. I do not wish to trouble your Majesty with a particular examination of all the circumstances which conducted my brother into that transaction, in which, however, I am persuaded your Majesty will be happy, on consideration, to find that the Duke of York has distinguished himself as eminently for sound judgment and an honourable character, as for the spirit and personal courage which belongs to your Majesty’s blood. It is not the event itself, but some collateral circumstances attending it, which I would advert to.

“Whatever the nature of Mr. Lenox’s complaint was, it must be allowed that a challenge from an officer to his colonel is an unusual transaction, and one which is extremely opposite to the general notions of discipline and subordination in the army. It must be allowed that a challenge from a private man, one of your Majesty’s subjects, to a Prince of the Blood, and especially to one so dearly allied to the throne, is still more unusual; and if drawn into a practice, must be deemed productive of very important consequences to the tranquillity of the nation, and the security of the succession. The circumstance to which I would draw your Majesty’s attention is, that Mr. Lenox was publicly countenanced by your Majesty’s minister the very day on which the event took place; was received the next day in a very public assembly, and on many other occasions since, with every mark of graciousness and favour by the Queen; and is not yet known to have received any signification of your Majesty’s displeasure. I must also entreat your Majesty’s attention to another most remarkable circumstance: the challenge was delivered to your son; and his antagonist was attended to the field by a Lord of your Majesty’s Bedchamber—one who is not merely a political servant, but belongs to your Majesty’s family, and is immediately attending on your person. His mother is in the family of the Queen; and he and his family have dwelt almost the whole of their lives at your Court, in your Palace, and enjoying eminently your Majesty’s and the Queen’s constant favour and bounty.

“Thus circumstanced, Lord Winchelsea did not think it incumbent on him to resign his situation in your Majesty’s family. Lord Winchelsea has not been dismissed from your Majesty’s service, nor has he received any reprimand or other expressions of your Majesty’s disapprobation, but still approaches your Majesty’s person, and to the world must undoubtedly

appear to enjoy at Court the same grace and favour as before this extraordinary transaction. I hope your Majesty will not believe me capable of insinuating that these or any other circumstances can ever convey to my mind the most remote suspicion that to attempt the life of the Duke of York, or to be voluntarily accessory in putting it in danger, or even to be forward in espousing the quarrels of his enemies, are things not displeasing to your Majesty, much less a road to favour. I do most solemnly protest that neither I nor any of my brothers have ever for a moment harboured a thought so undutiful, so monstrous, and, we know, so false and injurious to your Majesty. We are, on the contrary, firmly convinced, and it has been often our only consolation in the midst of our afflictions, of your Majesty's tender, affectionate, and indulgent love for us and all your children. We do assure your Majesty that this is our frequent theme, and that our hearts overflow with gratitude and duty whenever we reflect on your Majesty's kind and paternal disposition, which, we acknowledge with joy, was never manifested more signally than in the kindness with which we were happy enough to be received by your Majesty, when we were restored to your Majesty's presence on the joyful occasion of your late recovery. On the other hand, we humbly and earnestly entreat your Majesty, on our parts, not to believe those who tell you that we do not love you. Whoever they may be, they are your enemies as well as ours. But it is in proportion to our own affection for your Majesty, to our own confidence in your love, and to the value which we set upon it, that we may contemplate with pain and anxiety every circumstance which to others may seem to render those blessings questionable. Permit me, therefore, to observe to your Majesty, that the world is so framed, and judges so grossly the appearance of things such as they strike the eye, that undoubtedly, in this late transaction, a most ungracious impression must be made on the minds of many. They will not fail to remark that Mr. Lenox could have no difficulty in finding a second against the Duke of York out of his father's family.

“As soon as I had learnt the happy account of my brother's safety, and had received the particulars of the affair from himself, I flew to Kew, in order to communicate to your Majesty the fortunate issue of a business which had well-nigh proved so fatal. Your Majesty received the account with all the tenderness, affection, and anxious sensibility which belong to your paternal goodness, and which the occasion could inspire in the breast of the kindest father. It is a matter, then, of deep affliction, as well, I am sure, as a circumstance of great and anxious alarm, that I should be compelled to contrast the deportment of the Queen on

this occasion with that of your Majesty. Your Majesty knows that I had requested a private audience, and that my wish was to have communicated this event to your Majesty's ear alone. I considered the transaction as of too delicate and of much too affecting a nature to be broken abruptly to the Queen; and it was therefore with regret that I found myself under the necessity of relating in her presence an affair, the very nature of which was agitating to a mother, and in which some circumstances were sufficiently critical and alarming to shake even the constancy of your Majesty, and to draw from you expressions of parental solicitude and even horror, which, while they did honour to your Majesty's feelings, were surely to be more naturally looked for in a mother on such an occasion. Your Majesty is my witness, that during the whole relation the Queen did not utter a syllable either of alarm at the imminent danger which had threatened the life of my brother but an hour before, of joy and satisfaction at his safety, or of general tenderness and affection towards him, which might appear natural in moments thus afflicting. Nor were these the only testimonies of indifference that I was obliged to observe. For your Majesty must well remember that the first word the Queen pronounced, and the whole tenor of the only conversation she afterwards held, was a defence of Mr. Lenox's conduct, strongly implying a censure on that of my brother.

"The Duke of York had himself the happiness of seeing your Majesty the next day, and enjoyed in that interview the inexpressible satisfaction of receiving from your Majesty every token of tenderness and sensibility which his situation could draw from the best and most affectionate parent. Your Majesty's kindness has been the subject of our admiration and gratitude ever since, and the impression it has made on us can never be erased from our hearts. Your Majesty is again our witness that at this first meeting with the Duke of York, the Queen observed a total silence on the subject which had thus affected your Majesty. This recent and interesting event was not even alluded to, and on such a day her Majesty condescended only to address my brother on the most indifferent topics. Since that period it is matter of public notoriety, and has no doubt been so of public observation, that Mr. Lenox has received the most distinguishing marks of her Majesty's approbation on every occasion on which they could be bestowed, and has been permitted, if not invited, to mix even in the personal society and amusements of your Majesty's family. This conduct I am confident he would not have dared to hold if your Majesty had been present, nor can the world suppose him to have hazarded what must have appeared even to himself, at least, so shocking

an indecorum without being well assured that it would not have been disapproved of by the Queen.”*

Nor did the scandals end here. A ball was given at St. James's Palace on the King's birthday. Colonel Lenox was invited, and actually danced in the very set with the Prince of Wales and his brothers! There was, at least, a want of taste in this proceeding, and the Prince, no doubt glad of the opportunity, took a step which was a surprise for the company. As he was dancing down the country dance with his sister, and turning each couple, he came to Colonel Lenox and his partner. As the Princess was going to “turn” Colonel Lenox, the Prince stopped short, and, seizing her hand, abruptly led her out of the dance. The Duke of York, who came next, turned Colonel Lenox and danced on; but his brother, the Duke of Clarence, followed the example of the Prince of Wales. The Queen asked him—though she must have known the reason of his behaviour—“was he tired?” He answered, “Not at all.” She then supposed “he found it too hot.” Irritated by this hypocrisy—for she must have known what was the cause of offence—he broke out with a reply that “in such company it was impossible not to find it too hot.” “Then,” said the Queen, “I suppose you mean that I should break up the ball?” to which the Prince replied that “it was the very best thing she could do.” And accordingly she gave the signal for retiring.†

Some odd incidents were associated with this affair. Out of this rencontre another arose—between Colonel Lenox and Mr. Theophilus Swift, an Irish gentleman—occasioned by some strong language which the latter had thought proper to make use of respecting the duel, in a publication addressed to the King. The parties met at Bayswater, and Mr. Swift was severely wounded.

The Bishop of Llandaff offered “his warmest congratulations” to the Duke on a late event; adding that, “As a Christian bishop, I cannot approve of any man's exposing his life on such an occasion. As a citizen, I must think that the life of one so near to the crown ought not to be hazarded like the life of an ordinary man; but, as a friend to the house of Brunswick, I cannot but rejoice in the personal safety, and in the personal gallantry, too, of so distinguished a branch of it.”

Colonel Lenox's sister was so touched with the Duke's magnanimity that she begged to be allowed to have the curl that had been shot away! She was gratified; and from this period, we are told, “the purest friendship” between the parties arose.

* From the letter to the King, “Correspondence of Fox,” ii. 346.

† The Prince, however, made a gracious apology to Lady Catherine Barnard, who was Colonel Lenox's partner.

Even on his deathbed the royal personage bethought him of his early associations, and directed that another lock of his hair should be transmitted to the lady.

Mr. Raikes tells us that the Prince never forgave Lord Winchelsea for his share in the transaction; and, after the old King's death, he seldom or never appeared at Court. His duel with the Duke of Wellington, however, shows him to have been a weak personage. The Duke of York, in this transaction, as all through his life, showed himself superior to little resentments, and, Mr. Raikes adds, "had always a great esteem for his character, and though from their different modes of life they did not often meet, he never failed to express it. In those days, when his royal highness was in the habit of dining with me, I once asked Lord Winchelsea to meet him, and I was struck by the cordiality with which he greeted him."*

"The charming manners," adds Lady Minto, in a very just view of the Prince's character, "which threw a glamour over the utter worthlessness of his moral character, were combined with considerable talents and acquirements, and could hardly have existed without them, for perfect good breeding would seem to be either the result of a combination of superior moral qualities—which we know the Prince had not—or of certain mental qualities, such as quickness of perception, readiness, and tact—and these he appears to have possessed in no ordinary degree. Sir Walter Scott remarked that it was impossible to form a fair judgment of the abilities of the man who introduced whatever subject he chose, discussed it just as long as he chose, and dismissed it when he chose; but the remark is only just if abilities of a high order are meant. To do the three things well which Scott enumerated would require, in the society of the men the Prince lived with, no small amount of general information, perception, and observation."

The following natural and affectionate letter, in reference to the illness of his brother, shows him in a pleasing light:

THE PRINCE OF WALES TO LORD LOUGHBOROUGH.

"York House, half-past 12 o'clock p.m., July 2nd, 1789.†

"MY DEAR LORD,

"The excessive goodness and friendship I ever have experienced from you, makes me trespass, I assure you much against my wishes, once more upon you, hoping that you will forgive my absence this evening from a party which, I am certain from everything I have hitherto witnessed, must afford the

* Raikes, "Journal," i. 463.

† Lord Campbell, vi. 213.

greatest pleasure and delight to all whose minds are perfectly at ease, and who have nothing to occupy them but the hospitable and pleasing reception you give all your friends. But to tell you the truth, my dear Lord, I am very unfit for anything so gay or so agreeable. The anxiety I have undergone the whole of this day has worried me to death; and though, thank God, the physicians assure me that my brother is as well as can be, considering his complaint, yet I should feel miserable to leave him. Could I have the pleasure of seeing you in Bedford Square this night, I should wear the same countenance of pleasure which I am sensible that all those, who have not a sick bed to attend, naturally must do at your house. I am sure, from what I know of you, that you will feel for me, and for once forgive me for the disappointment I occasion myself.

“I remain, my dear Lord,

“Ever most sincerely your Friend,

“GEORGE P.”

Indeed, as we follow the embarrassing and disagreeable complications in which the Prince was now involved, and consider that this was a young man, barely five-and-twenty, it is impossible not to be surprised at the part he took, and the position he maintained, among men like Fox, Sheridan, Burke, and many more. Through all his follies there was a certain character, which made itself felt.

After this hostile encounter, it was felt matters could not rest there; a bitter and unkind letter addressed by the King to his third son, in which he accused him of taking part with his brothers, brought things to a crisis. It was determined by the Princes that a formal statement of their grievances should be drawn up, and with it a complete vindication of their conduct, and laid before the King. This was to include an indictment of the Queen. The task was entrusted to Sir G. Elliot, who bestowed immense labour and pains upon it; and during its progress he had many opportunities of seeing and consulting the Prince of Wales, who impressed him in the most favourable manner.

“He was excessively pleased with it, expressing every now and then his approbation in a very warm and agreeable way. He made, at the same time, several very sensible observations, and suggested some alterations which I think perfectly judicious, and shall certainly adopt. I was very much struck with the appearance of judgment, as well as with the signs of good disposition and proper feeling, which he gave in this interview, and I will venture to say that few princes have had anything like the good or considerable qualities which both the Prince of Wales and the Duke of York possess.”

When the letter was completed, it was laid before a sort of council at Carlton House, and the question was formally debated whether it should be sent forward. The step was strongly opposed by the Duke of Portland and Lord Loughborough, on the ground that it amounted to burning their ships; that it forced upon the King the necessity of deciding between the Queen and her son; and there was little doubt which side he would take, under her inspiration or compulsion. The result, probably, would be that the Prince and his party would be forbidden the Court. The Prince himself and the Duke of Clarence, as well as Burke, were eager for taking action. Fox doubted. Before anything was determined, the Prince set off for Brighton, hurrying up as usual in a spasm and proposing to give all the papers to the Chancellor, to lay them before the King when an opportunity offered. It would seem that it was never presented, and it may be presumed to be the best vindication of the Prince that could be offered.

“SIR,

“Thinking it probable that I should have been honoured with your commands to attend your Majesty on Wednesday last, I have unfortunately lost the opportunity of paying my duty to your Majesty before your departure from Weymouth. The accounts I have received of your Majesty’s health have given me the greatest satisfaction, and should it be your Majesty’s intention to return to Weymouth, I trust, Sir, there will be no impropriety in my then entreating your Majesty’s gracious attention to a point of the greatest moment to the peace of my own mind, and one in which I am convinced your Majesty’s feelings are equally interested. Your Majesty’s letter to my brother, the Duke of Clarence, in May last, was the first direct intimation I had ever received that my conduct and that of my brother the Duke of York, during your Majesty’s late lamented illness, had brought on us the heavy misfortune of your Majesty’s displeasure. I should be wholly unworthy the return of your Majesty’s confidence and good opinion, which will ever be the first objects of my life, if I could have read the passage I referred to in that letter without the deepest sorrow and regret for the effect produced on your Majesty’s mind; though at the same time I felt the firmest persuasion that your Majesty’s generosity and goodness would never permit that effect to remain, without affording us an opportunity of knowing what had been urged against us, of replying to our accusers, and of justifying ourselves, if the means of justification were in our power.

“Great, however, as my impatience and anxiety were on this

subject, I felt it a superior consideration not to intrude any unpleasing or agitating discussions upon your Majesty's attention, during an excursion devoted to the ease and amusement necessary for the re-establishment of your Majesty's health. I determined to sacrifice my own feelings, and to wait with resignation till the fortunate opportunity should arrive, when your Majesty's own paternal goodness would, I was convinced, lead you even to invite your sons to that fair hearing, which your justice would not deny to the meanest individual of your subjects. In this painful interval I have employed myself in drawing up a full statement and account of my conduct during the period alluded to, and of the motives and circumstances which influenced me. When these shall be humbly submitted to your Majesty's consideration, I may be possibly found to have erred in judgment, and to have acted on mistaken principles, but I have the most assured conviction that I shall not be found to have been deficient in that duteous affection to your Majesty which nothing shall ever diminish. Anxious for everything that may contribute to the comfort and satisfaction of your Majesty's mind, I cannot omit this opportunity of lamenting those appearances of a less gracious disposition in the Queen towards my brothers and myself than we were accustomed to experience; and to assure your Majesty, that if by your affectionate interposition these most unpleasant sensations should be happily removed, it would be an event not less grateful to our minds than satisfactory to your Majesty's own benign disposition. I will not longer, etc. etc.

"G. P."

The most important portions may be given here :

I owe to your Majesty (it begins) at all times, an account of my actions; but I am most anxious to render that account of myself and my conduct during the unhappy period of your Majesty's illness; because while it was full of delicacy, embarrassment; and difficulty to me, it has been exposed in the same proportion to the malicious or interested misconstruction of others, whom I have reason to think enemies of my honour and welfare, as well as wholly indifferent to those of your Majesty.

My first object is to regain for myself, and my brother the Duke of York, your Majesty's good opinion and affection.

Permit me, first, to relate those circumstances which are of a private and domestic nature.

The severity of your Majesty's disorder having increased to an alarming degree, I repaired immediately to Windsor, and,

disregarding every other object, applied myself wholly to the care of a health so valuable, and to the alleviation of your Majesty's sufferings. I provided what appeared to me the best means for your recovery; I observed the conduct of those who were entrusted with the immediate attendance on your Majesty; I referred the plan of management to your physicians, and superintended the due and punctual execution of their directions. In these anxious offices, I had the consolation of being supported by the constant, unwearied, and affectionate attendance and counsel of my brother, the Duke of York. It is with satisfaction I inform your Majesty that we desired and received the advice of the Lord Chancellor on every material step that we took. I reflected on the great personal confidence with which your Majesty had distinguished Lord Thurlow; and the nature as well as eminence of his office seemed to point him out as a person who might be consulted with peculiar propriety in this most critical and delicate posture of affairs. In what manner I was able to discharge these weighty duties, it is not fit that I should be called upon to speak myself; I choose rather to refer your Majesty to the testimony of the Chancellor, and to that of your Majesty's attendants at that period, who were eye-witnesses of our conduct. This only I think it right to say, that from the hour on which the alarming violence of your Majesty's illness appeared to require the care which I have described, until the removal of your Majesty to Kew, neither myself nor the Duke of York was absent for a day from Windsor, nor suffered any consideration, even of health, much less any lighter avocation, to retain us an hour from your Majesty's chamber, and from the discharge of a duty so dear to us both.

Next to the care of your Majesty's person, that of your private and domestic affairs appeared to claim my attention. While your Majesty and the Queen continued to reside at Windsor, the money, jewels, papers, and other effects belonging to your Majesty, did not seem to require any particular caution for their security. But on the removal of your Majesty to Kew, I considered it as my duty to provide for the safety of those effects; and I determined at the same time to do so in such a manner as should be consistent with that scrupulous delicacy which suited the occasion, and which I felt to be becoming in a voluntary, although highly necessary, interference with the affairs of your Majesty not expressly authorised by your Majesty's orders.

In this view, after mentioning my intentions to the Lord Chancellor and receiving his approbation, I desired the attendance of Lord Brudenell, who is keeper of your Majesty's privy-purse, together with that of Lord Weymouth, whom I judged to be the

person whose presence your Majesty would the most approve upon such an occasion. I directed them to take, from your Majesty's drawers at Windsor, the jewels and the money which were deposited there. An account of each was taken on the spot, and they were delivered to the custody of Lord Brudenell, whom I conceived to be the proper officer for that purpose. Lord Brudenell's receipt was taken at the same time, specifying both the jewels and the money which were committed to his charge, and he was directed to deposit these effects in his office, and be answerable for their safe custody, and for their production whenever your Majesty should require it.

The situation of the apartments at Windsor in which these effects were lodged appeared to me by no means secure, and the suspicion which might get abroad of their value seemed to increase the risk. These circumstances determined me to use the precaution I have described for their security. Yet I felt it to be a duty of too delicate a nature, to discharge in my own person, and I selected, to the best of my judgment for this service, those who I thought would be most acceptable to your Majesty on such an occasion. The whole was done in my own presence, but was performed solely by the hands of Lord Brudenell and Lord Weymouth. A difficulty occurred concerning your Majesty's papers which were deposited in the same place. It had been the opinion of the Lord Chancellor that, for greater security, they should be removed, and, after being properly docketed, should be deposited in some other place. But observing that they appeared to be arranged with great regularity and method, and being extremely unwilling that any paper of your Majesty's should undergo the slightest inspection, or that your Majesty should even have reason to suspect that they might have been seen by any one, I represented these circumstances to the Chancellor, and, with his consent, determined to leave them untouched by any hand whatever, exactly in the places and order in which your Majesty had deposited them. I did not conceive that papers were in the same danger as money or jewels; and I judged that it would be most acceptable to your Majesty to find your papers exactly as you had left them. Besides which, I felt an invincible repugnance to permitting, without your Majesty's order, even that degree of inspection which was necessary for preserving their arrangement, to any persons, however confidential I might know them to be with your Majesty. These were my motives for taking this resolution. The drawers were accordingly locked and the keys enclosed in a paper, which was sealed with Lord Weymouth's seal, as well as with others; and continued in this manner till it was restored to your Majesty by my brother, the Duke of York, as soon as your

Majesty's recovery gave us reason to believe that you would wish to receive it.

I have not troubled your Majesty with the detail of these arrangements in order to claim any positive merit on the occasion. I did my duty, and no more. But as this has been the only occasion in my life in which I have felt an obligation to take on myself the direction of a pecuniary or any similar concern of your Majesty's, I trust only that my conduct in this instance has not been such as to deserve the reproach of personal unkindness towards your Majesty, much less such as to expose me to the dishonourable suspicion of infidelity in trusts of that nature, or to render any degrading and affronting caution more necessary against me than any other person.

With whatever consciousness of rectitude, and, therefore, with whatever satisfaction I may reflect on the discharge of my duty in this instance, yet I have ever since had strong reasons for regretting the necessity I was under to act in it. For it was the first occasion on which I had the misfortune to feel the Queen's displeasure, and to incur her anger.

The measures which I have described for securing your Majesty's effects against the attempts either of theft or curiosity, were no sooner known at Kew than her Majesty expressed the most marked disapprobation, and, to my extreme astonishment, condescended, at my next interview, to a species and warmth of reproaches, into which nothing could have surprised or betrayed her Majesty but a degree of passion, which, as I had never witnessed nor believed to exist in her Majesty before, so I accounted it the more remarkable on the present occasion, not conceiving in what manner the circumstances were capable of producing so extraordinary an effect.

Without ascribing to this cause the unfortunate indisposition which I have ever since experienced in the Queen's mind, I have to lament it, however, as the period from which I must date the first open demonstration of her anger; and I cannot but be sensible that I have never since recovered with her Majesty any share of that confidence or affection which I once considered it my principal happiness to possess so entirely.

Your Majesty's removal to Kew was directed by a Cabinet Council of your Ministers, who previously assembled at Windsor, and examined your physicians relative to that measure. As soon as that event had taken place, the care of your Majesty fell solely and exclusively into the hands of the Queen. From this period I suddenly found my access to your Majesty prohibited in such a manner that I was immediately excluded from the satisfaction of seeing your Majesty, and, indeed, almost deprived of the privilege

to receive authentic information of your Majesty's health and situation.

I cannot describe to your Majesty, nor is it, indeed, easy to ascertain the precise means by which this exclusion of myself and of my brother—for it extended to us both—from all personal attendance of dutiful affection on your Majesty, was brought about. We had, indeed, a right, as your sons, and we felt it as such, to as free and unreserved personal admission, and to as full, particular, and confidential information on such a subject as any other person whatever, until some provision should be made by a competent authority for our exclusion. But your Majesty must be sensible that many considerations, both of affectionate caution respecting your Majesty's health, and also of personal delicacy, belonging to the peculiar complexion of the times, rendered it impossible for us to assert and insist on this right, invaluable as we deemed it, when opposed by the various devices and pretensions with which the possession of your Majesty's person so abundantly furnished those who wished to remove us from your presence. The consequence was, that notwithstanding all the efforts which the circumstances would allow us to make, we came ultimately to be considered as total strangers in your Majesty's palace, and not only to be debarred from your presence, but from a knowledge even of your Majesty's condition. This exclusion was rendered the more mortifying and irksome to us by our knowledge that while we were debarred from your presence, many other persons who are neither connected with your Majesty by blood, nor, as we believe, attached to your Majesty by sincere affection, as we are, had free admission whenever they desired it.

It had been the practice of your physicians to send me every day a written account of your Majesty's health, and this communication was naturally somewhat more particular than the public account, communicated at St. James's to all the world. It was, in fact, the only distinction that was made between myself and the rest of your Majesty's subjects. Your Majesty cannot better learn the degree in which it was intended to exclude your sons from intercourse with your Majesty, and knowledge of your situation, than by hearing that an express order was delivered by authority to your Majesty's physicians to refrain from communicating to me any other account of your Majesty's health than that which was transmitted daily to the lord-in-waiting at St. James's for the information of the public.

I could not, Sir, but feel, in common with my brother, the Duke of York, both grief and mortification at being thus separated and severed, as it were, from your Majesty's person and family. I have had much reason to lament it since, for reasons which may

perhaps throw some light on the motive of those who brought it about. For, from the first moment of your Majesty's joyful recovery, your Majesty's ear has, by the banishment of your sons, been exclusively possessed by those who have unfortunately felt either an interest or inclination to misrepresent our conduct, and hurt us in your opinion. I shall for ever account it the greatest calamity of my life, that in the first period of returning health, when your Majesty's mind was yet free from prejudice, your ear untainted by slander, and your heart—as it ever is, but most peculiarly so in those moments of softness which succeed affliction and disease—open to impressions of affection, tenderness, and indulgence, I and my brother, who both have ever loved you, and have never justly forfeited our title to your love, were held in exile from your presence, and condemned to silence, while our enemies were labouring, with every advantage of constant intercourse with your Majesty and the impossibility of being answered, to ruin us in your esteem.

In laying before your Majesty an account of those transactions which may be deemed of a public and political nature, it is with the utmost pain that I must recall to my own memory, and perhaps wound your Majesty's feelings, by alluding to the unhappy necessity which appeared to arise out of your severe malady for supplying, by a temporary Government, the lamented absence of your Majesty during the continuance of your illness. But I rely both on your Majesty's fortitude, and on the ascendancy which the love of justice has in your mind over every weakness of ordinary natures, for your generous approbation of my resolution to postpone the inferior considerations of sensibility and delicacy, to objects which I know your Majesty rates far higher—the honour of your son, the dignity of your family, and the true interests of your crown and people.

Supported by this reflection, I cannot hesitate to set before you a view of the new, anxious, and arduous situation in which your Majesty's indisposition suddenly placed me, as well, indeed, as the legislature and the whole nation.

I am too thoroughly persuaded of the magnanimity as well as the justice of your Majesty's character to feel the smallest apprehension that any indisposition can arise in your Majesty's mind towards me, from the consideration that all men united, without a single exception, in the opinion that the temporary government ought to be placed in my hands. This appeared a necessary consequence of the relation which I bear to your Majesty, and I am sure your Majesty will consider it, as you justly may, as an acknowledgment made to the claim of your Majesty's blood; not sought by me nor bestowed by Parliament as a thing personal to

myself, or as a claim of mine distinct from, much less adverse to, your Majesty's personal interests, or those of your crown.

Such were the circumstances which compelled me to take any part whatever in the affairs of Government. But I cannot for a moment deny myself the satisfaction of acquainting your Majesty, and I hope it will remain strongly impressed on your Majesty's mind throughout, that this necessity was not declared by me, but was first announced to the world by your Majesty's ministers, who took the lead in proposing and bringing forward every step that has been made for accomplishing this purpose. While I was permitted to attend on your Majesty, my whole mind was engaged, and my whole time employed, in the more interesting cares of private and domestic duty; I refrained altogether, by system as well as inclination, from every object of a different nature. The only perfectly true and correct account that can be given of the part which I took respecting public measures and the affairs of Government is, that I industriously avoided taking any part at all; I remained from the beginning wholly passive and neutral, until the steps taken by your Majesty's ministers called me unavoidably from this retirement into action; and rendered it my indispensable duty to your Majesty, your people, and myself, to direct my most serious attention to the consideration of public affairs.

I must once more implore your Majesty to reflect attentively on this circumstance, and allow to it its due weight in the judgment you are to form of my conduct. It is far from my object in this address to defend the wisdom of all I did, or omitted to do, in this trying situation.

He then vindicates his share in the late political transactions :

I must be permitted to claim, with the greater confidence, the full effect of this determination on your Majesty's mind, as it was not adopted without opposition from one in whose opinion I might have been justified for acquiescing, and under the authority of which I might have sheltered an opposite conduct if I had been disposed to adopt it. I was urged, from an honourable opinion, I am sure, and one which was sincerely entertained by the person to whom I allude, to come forward much earlier in my own person to claim the Government, as falling to me of right during your Majesty's illness, and to take the lead out of the hands of your Majesty's ministers into my own. Such was the opinion of my uncle, the Duke of Gloucester, and he pressed it on me with all the earnestness which belonged to a sincere and fixed opinion on a subject of such moment.

The first public act in which I had any share was a declaration, made at my request by my brother, the Duke of York, to the House of Lords, speaking in his place as a peer of Parliament, on the 15th of December.

It will be necessary to state in a very few words the subject which was then under consideration. Instead of proceeding to settle the mode in which the Government was to be exercised in your Majesty's name, your Majesty's ministers thought proper to propose that the two Houses of Parliament should first vote an abstract proposition declaratory of their rights on that occasion. This proceeding appearing to us both unnecessary and dangerous in itself, we could not help considering it, in the intention of those by whom it was proposed, as a measure of pure hostility to me. We were sure at least that its tendency was necessarily injurious, in the highest degree, to my reputation in the country. I was informed that it was not usual for Parliament to come to verbal declarations of their rights previous to exercising them, and that such a measure has only been resorted to in cases where the jealousy of Parliament has been excited by attempts from some adequate authority to dispute or to defeat the privilege which they have asserted. The declaration of the rights of Parliament on this occasion did undoubtedly convey to the world an insinuation that they had been attacked; and as there existed at the time no authority which could give weight or importance to such an attack but mine, the eyes of the world were naturally drawn towards me, and the nation was taught to believe that I had begun the public career to which I was unfortunately called, by some attempt or some claim inimical to the constitution and liberties of the country. I have, however, the satisfaction to assure your Majesty that the contrary was the case, and that I had never made, either directly or indirectly, any claim whatever. I know with certainty that no claim was ever offered to either House of Parliament by my authority, and I will venture to assure your Majesty that none was ever made or hinted at, in my name, without my authority. Much pains indeed were taken to misinterpret some sentiments expressed in debate by persons in whom I avow that I place confidence, and to treat them as propositions dangerous to the rights of Parliament. I cannot in general be supposed to know correctly what passes in debate in the House of Commons, but I have reasons on which I can depend, and which enable me confidently to assure your Majesty, not only that the sentiments alluded to were not such as they were, for obvious purposes, grossly misrepresented over the whole nation to be, but that they were rendered so clear and explicit by frequent ample and satisfactory explanation that it

was impossible even to misapprehend them; and that the scandalous and libellous perversion of detached words in debate, which were so diligently dispersed from one end of the kingdom to the other, could be the work only of a policy equally indifferent to truth, and adverse to your Majesty, your family, and the welfare and tranquillity of the nation.

In this view, and in this view alone, I authorised my brother, the Duke of York; to declare in my name to the House of Lords in substance that "I had never declared any opinion whatever concerning this important question, and that, so far from urging any claim on that occasion, I was too well acquainted with and revered too much those principles which had seated the house of Brunswick on the throne of these kingdoms, to form a wish for the exercise of any power which should not be sanctioned by that House, and the representatives of the people in Parliament assembled."

But I am well assured that your Majesty would not condemn the caution which led us to deprecate the agitation of that delicate question, and would surely not charge us on that account with any disregard for your Majesty's personal interests, or those which are most nearly personal to your Majesty—those of your family—if your Majesty had had an opportunity of being acquainted with the nature and tendency of propositions entertained, and even tendered to the nation, though unsuccessfully, indeed, at that critical and speculating period, by a person who stood the highest in authority and in your Majesty's confidence. These propositions were indeed neither adopted by the two Houses nor countenanced by the concurrence of any one opinion besides.

The sincere respect which I entertain for the acts of the two Houses of Parliament does not, therefore, preclude me from submitting to your Majesty whether some danger might not be reasonably and sincerely apprehended, both to the monarchy and to the constitution in all its points, from a discussion which could furnish an opportunity for promulgating from such a quarter an opinion which went to the total extinction, for the time being, of every existing principle of our Government; throwing open to arbitrary and undefined discretion every point of our constitution, both as to persons or powers; and well calculated, undoubtedly, to prepare—if such a project could anywhere have existed—a competition for the sovereign authority, throughout the British empire, to the exclusion of every one of your Majesty's blood.

In this light did the opinions, distinctly and repeatedly delivered by your Majesty's minister, Mr. Pitt, on this question of right appear to me, and I am not without grounds for

supposing that they must have conveyed a similar impression to most other men ; since all the support which Mr. Pitt is accustomed to find, and actually obtained throughout the strongest measures which he ventured to propose in this extraordinary crisis, could not, however, procure for him one assenting voice to the sentiments I have alluded to ; and your Majesty's Attorney-General, who must no doubt be supposed in general to act in concurrence with your Majesty's minister, delivered, however, on this occasion, an opinion diametrically opposite to the doctrine of Mr. Pitt.

I owed it to your Majesty to preserve entire for your Majesty, when you should resume your government, the rights, powers, and dignity of your crown such as you had before enjoyed them ; and I owed it also to your Majesty to fulfil the objects of your royal power by protecting your people from foreign danger, and providing for its internal tranquillity, prosperity, and happiness.

If these reasons might justify my apprehensions at being entrusted with the whole duties, but with only a portion of the power belonging to royal authority, your Majesty will see that it follows necessarily from the same principle that my difficulties, and therefore my uneasiness and alarm, should be still greater when I saw not only many powers cut off from the authority which I was to administer, but some of those very powers of which I was deprived erected into a distinct, separate, independent, and perhaps, therefore, adverse authority in the state ; and those very arms which are intended for the defence of the crown and the service of regular government, disposed of in such a manner as to be capable of being employed in defeating and destroying them.

I could not, at the same time, but lament one consequence which appeared too likely to follow from the proposed arrangement, of placing a considerable department of power and influence in the hands of the Queen.

I had been accustomed to see her Majesty engaged solely in domestic cares and occupations, and while her Majesty's mind had been thus employed, I had experienced at her hands from my infancy the strongest and most invariable marks of parental tenderness and even of personal partiality and fondness. Her affection had always been one of the first joys and the principal pride of my life. It was not, therefore, without much solicitude and pain that I perceived a scheme formed for creating between us a rival and separate interest, and endangering domestic harmony by political competition. I confess, Sir, it was with the most acute pain that I saw her Majesty set up by designing men

as the head of a system, which I must frankly and without reserve say I could not ascribe to any solicitude for your Majesty's happiness, or connect by any rational principle with your substantial interest, to every one of which I thought it dangerous and adverse in the extreme; but which I considered as a device of private ambition, which aimed at the accomplishment of its own projects by contention with me and opposition to the very power it was constrained to establish in one degree or other in my hands.

I cannot, however, quit this subject without expressing to your Majesty the resentment I felt at seeing a system, which appeared to me destructive of every object which I know your Majesty, as a wise and good sovereign, as well as a father and chief of a family, must hold most dear and valuable, justified by a reference to the meanest and most unworthy feelings which were supposed to exist in your Majesty's mind, and which I felt to be a cruel slander on your Majesty's character. The separation of the whole of your Majesty's household, to an extent even which could not be at first avowed, but was covered under the equivocal and undefined sense of that word, from the dignity, the patronage, and influence of your Majesty's representative, was defended on a ground which I am sure your Majesty will feel to be injurious to your magnanimity and public spirit. It was contended that your Majesty's private and personal feelings might be wounded by the arrangements which, without a colour of authority or probability, were assumed as a thing intended by me, if I had had the control of that department.

With this memorial (says Earl Russell) was written an introductory letter for the King's perusal, complaining in bitter terms of the Queen's treatment of her sons. This was also the composition of Sir Gilbert Elliot, but was not transmitted to the King. It was agreed that the introductory letter should be suppressed, and that a short letter, expressing in general terms the Prince's uneasiness under his father's displeasure, and stating that he had prepared a justification of his conduct to be submitted to the King, should be substituted for it. It seems not improbable that a letter, published by Mr. Moore in his "Life of Sheridan," from a rough copy of Mr. Sheridan's, was the letter written on that occasion. It answers to the description of the letter ordered to be written; but if so, it was not finished or transmitted to the King before the middle of August.

THE PRINCE OF WALES TO THE KING.

"SIR,

"I find myself at last not only at liberty, but I think, invited by your Majesty to throw myself at your feet and implore of your justice and paternal goodness, at least an equitable, if not a partial and indulgent hearing to the most solemn and anxious address that was ever made by a son to a father.

"During the calamitous period of your Majesty's late illness, I waited with impatience for that happy time when the recovery of your health might afford me an opportunity of appealing to your justice and affection, against the misrepresentations of those whose situations might enable them to preoccupy your Majesty's first opinions.

"I had reason to believe that attempts would be made to prejudice me in your esteem, and God knows my apprehensions have been too well justified by the event. Urgent, however, as I felt this concern to be, I was unwilling to disturb the first hours of your returning health by any matter however important to myself, which might either fatigue your attention or agitate your spirits; I refrained accordingly from pressing any application on the subject, till I was given to understand, with a joy which was shared indeed by the whole nation, but chiefly felt by me, that your health was perfectly confirmed. Since that period I have sought every opportunity of engaging your Majesty's attention to a subject which weighed so heavily on my mind. But in vain! Your Majesty has either been surrounded by persons whose presence rendered it improper to explain myself on delicate and confidential points; or if ever I have had the happiness to enjoy a few moments of your presence alone, I have on such occasions been expressly enjoined either by your Majesty or the Queen to abstain from all points of business whatever.

"I was not satisfied with seeking every opportunity to make a verbal explanation at your Majesty's feet; the difficulties which opposed my personal communication with your Majesty induced me, amongst other reasons, to have recourse also to my pen; and I flattered myself that some moments of leisure and some periods of strength would be found for perusing the justification of a son whose accusers, I too well knew, had procured, or rather constantly possessed, the means to be heard. When I considered the interesting nature of the subject, and still more the awe which I never fail to experience in your Majesty's presence, it was my wish to address your Majesty in writing, because it would both enable me to lay the matter before your Majesty in a more correct and satisfactory form, and would afford your Majesty an

opportunity of bestowing on it a more deliberate consideration than any verbal conference could do alone.

“In this view I collected some papers, which I thought important towards informing your Majesty of the transactions in which the course of events had involved me, and I proposed to annex some observations explanatory of my conduct. I delivered the papers to the Queen, requesting her to communicate them to your Majesty when she should find a convenient opportunity. I was constrained to trouble her Majesty with this application, partly by the fear of intruding unseasonably on your Majesty after your long illness, and partly by the obstacles which I found perpetually in the way of a personal interview; as well indeed as the express injunctions I had received to refrain from addressing your Majesty on business.

“Having waited for some time with great anxiety the effect of this communication, and a public intimation having been given to Parliament of the joyful event of your Majesty’s recovery, I addressed to the Queen the following letter:

“‘DEAR MADAM,

“‘I have this moment learned that Mr. Pitt has announced to the House of Commons that a communication is to be made to Parliament from his Majesty on Tuesday next.

“‘Your Majesty will, I am sure, have observed that, notwithstanding the impatience I must naturally feel to have a fit opportunity of submitting to his Majesty a faithful statement of my conduct and my sentiments on the conduct of others, I have abstained from every idea of intruding on his Majesty’s attention until the opinion of those who can best judge shall point out the proper time for submitting matters of business and public importance to his consideration.

“‘The notice given to-day I conceive to ascertain this point; and as your Majesty was graciously pleased to assure me that the papers I lodged in your Majesty’s hands should be communicated to his Majesty the moment it was fit for him to attend to public business, I request from your Majesty to be informed whether the present is the proper time to make that communication, and when in consequence my brother and myself may attend his Majesty upon a subject so interesting to our feelings, and the duty we owe to his Majesty and the public.’

“This letter was written on the 5th of March; and the next day I received an answer from her Majesty, acquainting me, ‘that she had taken an opportunity of mentioning to your Majesty that she was in possession of those papers, and must now leave it to

your Majesty's own judgment when you would think it proper to peruse them.'

"On the day following I received another letter from the Queen, enclosing one from your Majesty to her, both of which I take the liberty of copying in this place :

THE QUEEN TO THE PRINCE OF WALES.

" 'Kew, March 7th, 1789.

" 'MY DEAREST SON,

" 'I have found an opportunity of communicating to the King your letter of the day before yesterday, to which he has given me the enclosed in answer ; and as this paper contains his Majesty's sentiments upon the subject, I have nothing further to say, but hope that you are convinced of my having fulfilled your wishes, and that you will believe me sincerely,

" 'My dearest Son,

" 'Your very affectionate Mother and Friend,

" 'CHARLOTTE.'

"This letter enclosed the following from your Majesty to the Queen :

THE KING TO THE QUEEN.

" 'Kew, March 6th, 1789, Friday evening.

" 'MY DEAREST CHARLOTTE,

" 'As I cannot but be deeply impressed by the consideration of how much you must have been afflicted by the long continuance of my illness, and the events that attended it, I cannot but wish to prevent your having any further trouble concerning it ; and therefore desire you will acquaint both the Prince of Wales and Frederick, that, though I do not mean to decline giving that attention to public business which may be necessary, yet that I propose avoiding all discussions that may in their nature agitate me, and consequently must for the present decline entering on any subjects that are not necessarily before me.

" 'I shall ever remain, my dearest Charlotte,

" 'Your most affectionate Husband,

" 'GEORGE R.'

"I found myself unhappily constrained to submit to this declaration of your Majesty's pleasure, and I saw with grief every means of setting myself right in your opinion denied me. In this situation I could only resort to one sentiment capable of affording me either hope or consolation. I reflected on your

Majesty's habitual love and practice of justice, and on the tenderness and affection which I had experienced on many occasions at the hand of an indulgent father. I judged that the attempts of my enemies to deprive me of your love and good opinion must probably have been abortive; for I could not believe that your Majesty would either reject a reply to any accusation which you deemed worthy of attention, or would condemn your sons unheard on any charge, whether grave or frivolous. I confess, however, that the implicit confidence I should naturally have placed in this affection was much diminished, and very painful alarms were raised in my mind by many circumstances which I could not help observing. These were by degrees multiplied in such a manner as to leave me little doubt; and I now see at length my worst fears verified, and my misfortune too fully authenticated under your Majesty's hand, by a clear declaration of displeasure, and an explicit condemnation of my conduct on the tenderest point, conveyed in writing to one of my brothers. Many of the circumstances which gave me reason to apprehend some prejudice in your Majesty's mind against me, are of a nature which it is difficult or impossible to describe in words, or to render sensible to others by relation.

“I am sure your Majesty will not think it unnatural that these circumstances should sensibly afflict and alarm your sons, and we shall not be censured for drawing a rash conclusion, if we believe, that her Majesty's behaviour could not have been such as I have described, unless there had existed in her mind some previous dissatisfaction and some general indisposition towards us, independent of this transaction, and sufficient to extinguish entirely the natural affection and tenderness of a mother. If we observe the common course of nature and consult the happy experience of all other families, we cannot help acknowledging that Providence seems to have designed it as the part of a mother to feel and to express solicitude for the safety of her children; to absorb all other considerations in those of anxiety and tenderness at critical periods of a son's life; to plead his cause, even if it be doubtful; to heal all family differences, if such exist; to soften and conciliate towards her children the mind and opinion of their father, if it is in danger of being estranged: in examining their conduct to leave to others even the impartiality of a judge, but much more, the severe scrutiny of an adverse party, and above all, to leave to their rivals and enemies the care of fomenting the anger of their father, together with that of anticipating, and by that means, perhaps, procuring the condemnation of the world—an effect of her Majesty's unfortunate displeasure, which we have had too many occasions to feel and to lament.

“It is quite impossible, Sir, that we should behold with indifference a departure in our house alone, from that first and best law of nature which protects the harmony of other families, and which, reserving at least one indissoluble relation and one bond of affection exempt from decay, seems to have appointed maternal tenderness as the stronghold and the last sanctuary for domestic happiness, against those storms of adverse interests and rival passions which drive it from every other post.

“It is not, Sir, without a severe conflict, nor without the most acute pain, that we find at length power to express these sorrows to your Majesty. We are sensible of the sacred character and the religion as it were that surrounds and covers the subject of our complaint. Since we do not, and in our hearts cannot, acknowledge that we have merited, either by any part of our conduct, or by our most secret thoughts, the loss of the Queen’s love, we feel that in lamenting that dreadful calamity we appear to be her accusers, and her accusers before your Majesty. We entreat you therefore to cast your eye for a moment on the afflicting alternative which is left to us. We cannot disguise to ourselves our true situation. The Queen’s affection is estranged from us. We can neither be ignorant of nor forget a misfortune which we feel every day in a thousand shapes, both wounding our feelings and working our ruin. Her Majesty is alone possessed of your ear, and from the endearing relation which she bears to your Majesty, is naturally entitled to your confidence. In the Queen’s indisposition towards us we see therefore the loss also of your Majesty’s opinion and regard. Our characters and reputation in the world are not less endangered. Those who are known to approach most constantly her Majesty’s person, and to enjoy the greatest share of her confidence and favour, seem to have no other language in which to express their zeal and attachment for her Majesty, than the bitterest invectives against us, and no other business or occupation than to invent and circulate from one extremity of your dominions to the other, the most gross, false, and scandalous slanders on her sons. In the meanwhile we find ourselves constrained to a silence which our enemies and even the impartial part of the world may well enough attribute to a consciousness of guilt. What choice therefore is left to us, but either to forego voluntarily your Majesty’s love and the good opinion of the world, or to tell your Majesty and the world, that without blame on our parts we are unhappy enough to have been deprived of a mother’s affection, and to tender to your Majesty and the world the documents which we possess of our innocence?

“Yet, Sir, we might still be silent if even these reasons, powerful as they are, were the only grounds for our alarm, and

if our fears were not at length too surely verified by the event. For if the occurrences which I have alluded to could leave us without anxiety concerning the unfortunate impressions which may too probably have been made on your Majesty's mind to our disadvantage, your Majesty must appear to have deprived us of hope on that subject by a letter which your Majesty has written to my brother the Duke of Clarence. I trust your Majesty does not yet think us capable of perusing that unequivocal and severe declaration of your displeasure, without the most poignant grief and the deepest mortification. The love which we bear to the Duke of Clarence, and the happiness which we enjoy in our mutual affection and harmony, is our sole consolation under the many humiliating and afflicting circumstances which we experience in other branches of our family. The loss of that blessing would be a heavy blow indeed; but how much would its severity be increased, by reflecting that it comes from the hand of a parent! We see, therefore, with anguish, and we confess, with wonder, your Majesty, under the persuasion of others, and contrary to your own nature, labouring to hurt us in the opinion of our brother, and to deprive us both of his affection and society. It is with inexpressible grief we perceive the imputation of some monstrous but undefined guilt in us made a ground for harshness and rebuke even to him. I trust your Majesty will not be offended at seeing us sensible to such afflictions, and that you will allow, at least, that we are distinctly called upon to vindicate our conduct by one passage in your Majesty's letter. You are pleased to say, 'Though I choose to cast a veil over the unkindness I met with during my illness from the ill-advised conduct of my sons, yet I cannot but feel it, as well as the Parliament, and, indeed, the whole nation.'

"This, Sir, is the first explicit declaration you have made of these unfortunate and, I must presume to say on our parts, unmerited sentiments. Till now, we might flatter ourselves that, however prevalent in your palace such opinions might be, they had not yet reached your Majesty. Indeed, Sir, we cannot yet consent to banish entirely a hope, which is so indispensable to our happiness, and we would yet cling to a fond conjecture that your Majesty has rather yielded to the importunity of others, and condescended to adopt their suggestions, than spoken your own opinions, or consulted your own heart on this occasion. We have ever found your Majesty personally kind and good to us. We most solemnly and seriously call God to witness, that we have ever felt your goodness with gratitude, and repaid it with affection and reverence. We cannot, therefore, easily and rashly believe that your Majesty should become at once cruel and unjust. Yet

your Majesty will admit, that so express a declaration of your displeasure leaves us no choice, and that if any consideration on earth should induce us to withhold a full and circumstantial account of our conduct in that critical and important period of our lives to which your censure is applied, we should subscribe to our own condemnation, and should merit indeed the pain, heavy as it is, of your anger and reproaches. Your Majesty cannot be offended if we do not account your present judgment final and irrevocable; for your Majesty knows that we have not been heard, and that an opportunity to defend ourselves, although it has been often sought by us, has hitherto been denied. It would be, therefore, injurious to your Majesty's character, as a just sovereign, to believe that your mind is not still open at least to a fair and equitable consideration of the subject. With this view, we humbly lay the following relation at your Majesty's feet.

"It is submitted first, as it ought, to your Majesty. But we are taught by your Majesty's words not to neglect the opinion of our country, and to that country which we love and honour, and whose good opinion is essential to our comfort and happiness, we consider ourselves bound also to address ourselves.

"I will not detain your Majesty longer from the perusal of a paper which I hope will restore us to your esteem, and regain for us the blessings of your wonted affection and confidence."

CHAPTER XX.

1789.

THE most natural expression of the Prince's feelings at this time will be found in his letters to Lord Cornwallis, then in India. Here he delivers himself with a true *empressement*, and his utterances throw some light on the Duke of York's duel, as well as on the summary proceedings of the Court. The style of these curious productions will be noticed—the superabundance of assertion as well as of qualification: and it will be seen that this genial Prince loved a kind of florid exaggeration almost grotesque. Allusion has been before made to this Treves's father, a money-lender, whose definition of a gentleman, in answer to the Prince, was significant of his character as well as of the familiarity which the Prince tolerated—"A man with money in his pocket and that does not care a d——n for you or your father."

THE PRINCE OF WALES TO LORD CORNWALLIS.

"Carlton House, May 30th, 1789.

"MY DEAR LORD,

"I must begin by thanking you for the very kind and friendly letter I received from you by the last ship from the East Indies. It was so long since I had heard from you y^t I began to think you had forgot all y^r old friends in this part of the world. How things are changed, and what a chequered scene of Life I have been obliged to go thro' for the last six months! Ere this, I suppose, you will have heard of the King's Indisposition, and how the Minister not only attempted to destroy 'my Rights,' but

to deprive every other individual of our family of the common liberties & rights of Englishmen. Supported I have been by some 'real and true friends,' at the head of whom your Friend, my Brother, stood foremost, w^h has gained immortal Honor. Had you been here, my dear Lord, I doubt not y^t we sh^d have had the happiness of meeting with a similar support from you, tho' I am sorry to say that your members consulted the interests of the 'cause' of Pitt instead of the Rights and Independence of the Constitution of the Country, as well as of the House of Brunswick. Everything has fallen into very different hands. The King is convalescent, that is to say, he certainly is better. Everything is thrown into the hands of the Queen. Every Friend y^t supported me & the common cause of succession of the Family, if they had any place, have been dismissed, such as the Duke of Queensberry; and our little friend Lothian Queensberry has been dismissed by order of the Queen & Mr. Pitt from the Bedchamber. Lothian has left his regiment of Horse Guards; & they have had the Insolence to threaten the Duke of York with taking his Regiment of Foot Guards, and when they, at last, did not dare do that, they have brought officers into his Regiment, and committed towards him every species of Indignity to force him to resign, w^h he has had prudence & coolness sufficient, as well as firmness enough, to resist. Not only these great officers, but numbers of a lower class, whose sole dependence in life and sustenance depended upon their places, have been disgracefully dismissed from their offices for the disinterested support of me & our Family. You will forgive me, my dear Lord, for thus expatiating upon a subject w^h I w^d not have done but to such a friend, as I consider you. I cannot but confess y^t I feel for the dangerous situation in w^h the Rights & Liberties of this Nation are at present, as well as the very critical position in w^h every member of Our Family stands at present. Even the very precarious state of the King's health renders some People a little upon their guard, who are not driven to a state of Dispair, such as not only pervades the Minister himself, but his Adherents in General. I will not bore you any further at present, as I suppose you will have heard by many Letters of our critical situation in this country at the present Period, but trust you will attribute my prolixity to the intimacy of an old Friend.

"Before I conclude, I must thank you for the kind expressions you have made use of to me respecting my protégé, Mr. Treves. I confess I feel myself much interested in his wellfare and success in Life, & nothing can make me more happy than thinking y^t he will owe y^t Success to you. I have just heard from a Friend at the India House y^t the object of Treves' ambition, at present,

is to be appointed to the Adalet of Benares, w^h is now held by a Black named Alü Carrow. Understanding that most of the Adaulets are now held by Europeans, and as I am informed it is the intention that the Europeans are to be so placed in future, in preference to the natives, I sh^d be vastly happy if—without committing any injustice—you c^d place young Treves in y^e situation, as I shall feel personally obliged to you for his promotion.

“I will not trespass any further upon you, but conclude with desiring you to believe me, my dear lord,

“Ever sincerely your Friend,

“GEORGE P.”

It may have been suspected that what lent acrimony to this struggle of the Prince's, which had now terminated in his complete defeat, was the sense of his situation, now well-nigh desperate. Though an arrangement had been so recently made for the settlement of his debts, he had now become once more frightfully involved, and on this occasion, at least, without hope of extrication by the Parliament. A sum of £20,000 had been granted for Carlton House; but an estimate was sent in for £55,200 for building and furniture, which, during the course of the next two years, had been paid. What greed the Prince and his friends showed in this matter will be evident from the furniture estimate, which in 1787 was fixed at £5500. Within two years a demand was sent in “for furniture and decorations ordered for the state apartments, to replace some of that for which the sums voted by Parliament in 1787 had hardly been expended; and he had contrived that a much larger sum should be laid out on that costly ‘Folly’ of Carlton House; while a large sum had just been paid, not for the completion, but for the progress of the building, which was intended at the time of the application to the House, and to furnish other apartments not then projected,” and this was modestly placed at a sum of £56,950.* This, however, was summarily rejected by the Board. It certainly showed an incurable recklessness and even effrontery, and not the least prospect of reform.

Sunk, therefore, in debt and difficulties, and without prospect of extrication, in his desperation he resorted to the old favourite scheme for raising money abroad, from which he had been prudently dissuaded by his friends. This was the issuing bonds in the nature of “post-obits,” which were to be negotiated in foreign countries. This scandal was now to be talked of. In

* His creditors seemed to have lost all respect for him, and stopped him in the street with their demands. The workmen employed at Carlton House addressed a petition for payment to the Prime Minister.

July this year Mr. Wilberforce had a very agreeable dinner with Lord Chatham, whom he found "very chatty and good-humoured." Among other curious gossip, he told him that "a wretched dependant" of the Prince's had applied to a certain person—so confidential was his talk that the names are designated by numbers—to lend money on the joint bond of the Prince and his two brothers, double the sum to be paid when the King should die, and any of the brothers come to the throne. This matter (says Huish) was perfected on the 16th of December, 1788, witnessed by Andrew Robinson and Charles Bicknell, and on the same day the money was paid.*

This transaction had been set on foot during the King's illness, under the management of the cook Weltjie, "the wretched dependant," and a large operation was at first proposed to be carried out in Scotland and Ireland, under the direction of brokers. Weltjie introduced a Mr. Cator, of the Adelphi, and Mr. Jones, of Soho. The first provided £10,000, on the condition of his being repaid treble the amount. About £30,000 was said to have been obtained in £100 bonds, repayable in twelve years. It was stated that no interest was ever obtained from the Princes, which is not improbable, as they never had money to pay it with,

* The form of these bonds runs as follows :

"KNOW ALL MEN by these presents that We, George Prince of Wales, Frederick Duke of York, and William Duke of Clarence, all living in the City of Westminster, in the County of Middlesex, are jointly and severally, justly and truly indebted to John Cator, of Beckenham, in the County of Kent, Esquire, and his executors, administrators, and assigns, in the penal sum of Sixty Thousand Pounds of good and lawful money of Great Britain, well and truly paid to us at or before the sealing of these presents. Sealed with our seals this 16th day of December, in the 29th year of the reign of our Sovereign Lord George III., by the Grace of God, King, Defender of the Faith, Anno Domini 1788.

"The condition of the above-named obligation is such, that if the above bounden George Prince of Wales, Frederick Duke of York, and William Henry Duke of Clarence, or any or either of them, or any other of their heirs, executors, or administrators, shall well and truly pay unto the above-named John Cator, his executors, administrators, or assigns, the full sum of Thirty Thousand Pounds of lawful money of Great Britain, within the space or time of six calendar months next after any one or either of us, the said George Prince of Wales, Frederick Duke of York, and William Henry Duke of Clarence, shall come to and ascend the throne of England, together with lawful interest on the same, to be computed from the day that such event shall happen, up and home to the time of paying off this obligation, then, and in such case, the same shall become null and void; otherwise to be and remain in full force and virtue.

"GEORGE Prince of Wales, L. S.

"FREDERICK, L. S.

"WILLIAM HENRY, L. S."

the lenders paying it for a couple of years, when they became bankrupt.* But little relief, however, was obtained in this direction; for as the King recovered the security grew less and less valuable. It was then conceived that money might be raised abroad, and a sort of financial operation was accordingly set on foot in Holland. Mr. Abraham Goldsmidt, a financier, undertook the speculation, which was arranged at the Hague; though it would seem to have been started under the auspices of the Dukes of Portland and Northumberland, who at all times took an interest in settling his affairs. They had heard of the first loan, and the "usurious terms" which were offered. They had, no doubt, felt that he should be saved from the unbecoming proceedings of the "post-obits," and determined to arrange for his extrication on the usual and legitimate terms of good security and fair interest. Accordingly it was determined to raise a sum of about £350,000 on the security of the Duchy of Cornwall and Bishopric of Osnaburg, with payments by drawings and a sinking fund, and the whole to be paid off in twenty-five years. The two Dukes, Lords Southampton, Rawdon, and others, were to be trustees to receive the interest. The Duke of Portland had interviews with one Van der Meulen, who came from Holland, and the loan seemed to have been regularly subscribed at Antwerp by the House of Werbrouck and De Wolf, and a Frenchman, De Beaume, the three royal brothers being joined in the security.

This affair, like most of the transactions in which the Prince was concerned, was unfortunately to be attended with accusation of breach of faith, repudiation, etc. Over £100,000 is said to have been received in cash and jewels, but no interest was paid. The King presently heard of it, and was indignant at the unworthy mode in which his third son—a mere youth—had been drawn into such serious obligations. The whole was treated as an attempt to extort money; pleas were set up of "no value" being received, and the law officers discovered, or affected to discover, that the security of the Duchy could not be pledged. Though this matter has been hotly controverted on both sides, it seems that the events that followed this loan were of the most disastrous kind, and at least led to unpleasant suspicions, the reckless Princes, like other spendthrifts, seeming to look on those that lent to them as enemies, to whom any fate, for treatment,

* Lord Kingsborough told Mrs. Harcourt one night at the Queen's Lodge, that the Prince had been offering £10000 and an Irish peerage, after the King's death, for every £5000, though even on these terms he could get little.—"Mrs. Harcourt's Diary," p. 46.

was good enough. That industrious *chiffonnier*, Huish, whose garbage seems always to contain a certain amount of facts, has collected much about this curious affair.

"The plan," he says, "proposed by De Beaume, to raise a sum of money on the Continent for the use of the Princes, was very similar to that which was negotiated by the Boas in Holland. Mr. Bicknell was directed to prepare a bond for their execution for £100,000, payable to De Beaume, and vesting in him the power to divide it into £1000 each by printed copies of the bond, which, under the signature of De Beaume, with the amount and number certified by a notary public, should be as binding on the Princes as if executed by themselves. The original bond was deposited, in trust, in the bank of Ransom, Morlands, and Hammersley; while an attested copy was immediately delivered to De Beaume, and the bankers' acknowledgment of holding such a security was given as De Beaume's authority and credentials, as the agent of the three illustrious Princes, who, in this instance, seem to have taken every precaution to secure themselves against imposition.

"De Beaume went to Paris as the agent of the Prince of Wales, and established himself there in that capacity. The French Revolution then wore a very serious aspect, and many of the French wished to leave their country till better times. As by remitting bills to England they sustained a very heavy loss, the securities of the British Princes were eagerly purchased from De Beaume by those who wished to emigrate, because those securities were not only more portable than specie, but they were purchased without being subject to the fluctuations of the course of exchange, and at the time were considered as the best negotiable securities in the market. The unfortunate French who purchased them and came hither, thought themselves perfectly safe in this country; but as they could not get any money paid on them, they were involved in great difficulty, and consequently became very urgent and clamorous.

"The Duke of Portland was then Secretary of State for the Home Department, and to him came many complaints from Carlton House against such of the emigrants as were most troublesome and unjust in demanding their money. They were sent out of the country, as in the former instance, and landed on the Continent. Twenty-six foreigners, who were creditors of the Princes, and who had placed the utmost reliance on the honour and faith of a British Prince, were sent out of England, though no charge was preferred against them. It is, however, an accredited fact, that the Prince of Wales, on several occasions,

and to various persons, did deny the receipt of any consideration for the bond of De Beaume.

“The trustees delivered up the bond, which was cancelled at Burlington House, in the presence of the Duke of Portland, on the 16th of November, 1790. This remittance had been made by De Beaume in diamonds, through the bank of Perregaux at Paris, to the bank of Ransom, Morland, and Hammersley, on account of the Princes. The diamonds thus remitted were to the amount of £38,653 10s. We have the bills of parcels of these diamonds now before us—they were disposed of by his bankers for the benefit of the Prince: on what ground of common justice, then, could the Prince declare, that he had received no consideration whatever for the bond?

“De Beaume and his confederates were denounced as treasonable in the face of it, for declaring George III. to be King of Great Britain, *France*, and Ireland. The prisoners were tried, condemned, and executed within twenty-four hours.

“Thus, in one day, perished Richard, Chaudot, Mestrier, Niette, De Beaume, and Aubert, either for negotiating the Prince’s securities or for purchasing shares of them, as was also the case with Viette, a rich jeweller, who had purchased a hundred shares of the bond from De Beaume.

“The next victim who bled on the scaffold, for having been the purchaser of twenty shares of the Prince’s bond, was Charles Vaucher, a banker in Paris, who quitted France with a large fortune in 1792. He fixed his residence in England, where he married an English lady. Having demanded payment of the interest on his shares of the Prince’s bond, he was referred to the bank of Ransom & Co., when he was advised, if he wished to remain in England, never again to apply for his money; for, if he did, he would be sent out of the country, as many in his situation had already been. This threat did not deter him; he repeated his application, and was equally unsuccessful. He laid his case before Mr. Shepherd (afterwards Sir S. Shepherd), Solicitor-General, who decided that his claim upon the Prince was just and legal; and at the close of the opinion which that eminent lawyer gave are the following remarkable words: ‘If any action is brought with this case, it will require the clearest proof of the facts, and that there is no collusion between De Beaume and Vaucher, because, as a bill has been passed for the payment of his royal highness’s debts, subjecting them to the examination of commissioners, it will be a strong argument against the justice of a demand that has been withheld from such examination: however, there is nothing in the bill which

prevents a creditor of his royal highness from suing, if he chooses, in preference to going before the commissioners.'

"In this opinion the learned counsel seems to have anticipated the very objection that was raised by the commissioners, and the grounds on which they contested the validity of the claim. The Prince inserted it not in his schedule of debts, he disclaimed it *in toto*; and, therefore, as the Prince disavowed it, the commissioners could not be called upon to allow it; and the only redress which Vaucher could hope to obtain was by an appeal to the laws of the country. A copy of the opinion of Mr. Shepherd was sent, with a polite note, to the Prince of Wales, hoping his royal highness would render all legal measures unnecessary, by ordering the interest to be paid. The interest was not paid: the application was renewed to his royal highness, adding that, if no satisfactory answer were returned, such measures would be adopted as would compel his royal highness to pay the amount. On the 6th of October an official order was given for him to quit England in four days. Having other pecuniary matters to arrange, he petitioned the Duke of Portland to allow him to remain until the issue of his claims had been determined. On the 11th of October a warrant was signed by the Duke of Portland, directing William Ross and George Higgins, two of the King's messengers, to take Mr. Vaucher into custody till he should be sent out of the country. On the 15th he was taken into custody, and on the 20th he was carried to Harwich, to be sent thence to Rotterdam, where he arrived on the 23rd of the same month. Not long after his arrival on the Continent, he was apprehended, taken to Paris, and thrown into prison, where he remained until the 22nd of December, 1795, on which day he was tried on the same charges as De Beaume, was found guilty, and guillotined.

"Our limits will not allow us to enter at full into the cases of Mr. D. Lovell, the editor of *The Statesman*, and that of Mr. Auriol; but proof is on record that, with the diamonds remitted by De Beaume, and the money advanced by Auriol, the sum received by the Prince amounted to between £60,000 and £70,000 sterling."

The transaction, indeed, caused a great sensation abroad; and a number of pamphlets, setting out the grievances of the bondholders and those interested, were published on the Continent.*

* The following advertisement appeared in the Dutch papers of 1796: "September 2. Notice. The bearers of shares in the following loans, negotiated by Abraham and Simeon Boas, at the Hague, to wit, &c., 350,000 florins for the three English princes, namely, George Prince of Wales, Frederick Duke of York, and William Henry Duke of Clarence, made in 1789, &c., are entreated to apply before the 1st of September next, from

From this account* has been omitted all speculations or libellous insinuations and statements. But, after making due allowance, it seems but too probable that high-handed proceedings were adopted towards the unfortunate foreign bondholders. The defence urged for the Princes was—that spurious bonds had got into circulation; that “no consideration” had passed. The scandal caused by these transactions was great.

So late as 1829 claims were being made under this loan, and some of the mysterious journeys to the Continent of Sir William Knighton were connected with the arrangement of this affair.

nine in the morning till one in the afternoon, to the notary, Corneille van Homrich at Amsterdam; the notaries, Huggen en Tendall, at the Hague; where are deposited, for the purpose of being signed, the respective acts of procuration and qualification upon Messrs. Wills and Company, merchants, at Amsterdam, appointed to withdraw from the hands of the registrar of the Court of Holland the original letters of mortgage in the said negotiations (which letters were removed from the custody of Abraham and Simon Boas, to be there kept), to deposit them with the notary, Van Homrich, and to prevent, by this measure, any loss upon the said negotiations, to attend to the concerns of the subscribers, and to promote the payment of their interest, and the reimbursement of their capitals.”—Wallace, “Life and Reign,” i. 224.

* Two pamphlets were published at Antwerp in 1791, describing the negotiations, giving the names of trustees’ security, etc. The amount was over three millions and a half of guelders. It gives the date of the Prince’s signing the power of attorney, his two bonds, an account of Van der Meulen’s interviews with the Duke of Portland, the counsel’s opinion as to the power of mortgage, which was signed by Lowten, Adam, and Baldwin. The unfortunate Colonel Frederick, son of Theodore, King of Corsica, was employed as an agent in this transaction. Mr. Cyrus Redding investigated the whole transaction, and found in the *Moniteur* of the time the debates on the unfortunate bondholders.

CHAPTER XXI.

1790—1791.

THROUGH all these affairs, the King's illness, the debates on the Regency, and the quarrels with the Queen, there was one name often mentioned, and which exercised an important influence—that of Mrs. Fitzherbert, at whose house we hear of many secret consultations being held, "Jack Payne" and Sheridan being the chief councillors. She would have been less than woman had she not been excited by the prospect now opening, and it was currently reported that, had the Prince succeeded to the Regency, she was to have been created a Duchess. But the hold any adviser had over the Prince's mind was at all times uncertain, and it seems extraordinary how she contrived to retain her influence on one so unsteady. We may fairly impute it to respect for her and the honesty of her motives. One of his friends wrote: "I fear there is in the Prince this feature of his father—that he loves closets within cabinets, and cupboards within closets; that he will have secret advisers besides his ostensible ones, and still more invisible ones behind his secret advisers—that he will be faithful to none of them, and a most uncomfortable master to those ministers who would really serve him." These are the words of the sagacious and amiable Sir Gilbert Elliot, and severe as is the character it is not overdrawn. The reader will keep it before him during the course of this history, and find that it explains many of his proceedings.

Nor was Mrs. Fitzherbert without her troubles during this critical period. All this time the irrepressible Rolle was struggling to bring forward the question of her marriage. Horne Tooke had also some time before published his remarkable

pamphlet, in which he had persistently styled her "Your Royal Highness." But she still maintained her hostility to Mr. Fox. Sir Philip Francis, indeed, tells us that she often told him, that she so abhorred Fox, and never would be reconciled to him, "notwithstanding many advances and earnest submissions on his part, of which, at his request, I was more than once the bearer. She said that by his unauthorised declarations in the House of Commons he had rolled her in the kennel like a street-walker; that he knew that every word he said was a lie, and so on, in a torrent of virulence which it was in vain for me to encounter, so I gave the point up and made my retreat as well and as fast as I could. On the other hand, Horne Tooke flattered her in his own way—(but whether by direct access to her or not I cannot say—that she was Princess of Wales, that she must be acknowledged.) All this he maintained for the mere purpose of doing mischief, and to gratify his own rancours. The Prince ought to have sent to the House this message, supposing the thing to have been absolutely necessary, by his own Chancellor, or some principal officer of his household; or, at all events, Fox, if he *would* or *must* be the carrier of such a declaration, ought to have taken it in writing, on no other condition, and answering for nothing himself. All that can be said for his imprudence is, that, at that time he did not know the Prince, who soon after disavowed him, at least to the lady. At that time there was not a well-informed man in London who was not convinced that, in 1785, the rites and ceremonies of marriage between the Prince and Mrs. Fitzherbert had taken place according to the rules established in both Churches, and I am as sure of the fact as if I had been present."

It was, however, now so fully understood that the statement made in the House was a fiction, that her position had not been affected by it. It was remarked that certain great and exclusive ladies received her, not merely with friendliness, but with formal honours. Testimony to this belief of the marriage is found in a conversation held between Mrs. Harcourt and the Duke of Gloucester, in this very year of the King's recovery, when he told her that "the *marriage* between the P. and Mrs. Fitz. was without much love on either side. He had his amusements elsewhere, but he had much consideration for her. She was sometimes jealous and discontented; her temper violent, though apparently so quiet. He hoped," he went on to say, "the Prince would remain in her hands, as she was no political intriguer, and probably, if they parted, he would fall into worse hands."* This, the tone of the Court, seems to

* "Diary," p. 41.

define her situation, which was looked on as analogous to that of a German "left-handed" marriage.*

The Prince at this time found himself obliged to prosecute the proprietor of *The Times* newspaper—then not nearly so important an organ as it has become—Mr. Walter, for writing that he and his brother had entered the King's apartment and purposely disturbed him, and for libellous reflections. The offender was sentenced to two years' imprisonment and the pillory. This part of his punishment was remitted, and his term of imprisonment reduced to sixteen months.†

It may be conceived that if the Prince were in such straits, Mrs. Fitzherbert had her share of difficulties. She herself had expensive tastes, and had brought her jointure into the common stock. It must be said, the Prince in many of his straits came to her rescue with due loyalty and generosity. Thus one morning at her house in Park Lane, when he was with her, the bailiff arrived with a warrant for her arrest for a sum of £1825. There were no means of discharging this debt, though the Prince tried every resource. He at last sent for Parker, a well-known pawnbroker of Fleet Street, the same who was connected with the transaction in which the Duchess of Devonshire's jewels were concerned, and tried to raise the money on some of the lady's jewels. Owing to some difficulties this could not be contrived, and the Prince sent for his own jewels from Carlton House, which were pledged for the day, until the Prince could raise the sum from some Jews in St. Mary Axe.‡ Jewellers, indeed, figure largely in these transactions.

About this time he had made a most important change, as it seemed to him, viz. in selecting a new jeweller. Gray, of Sackville Street, having presumed to require "a settlement," had been discarded, and now Jefferey, of Piccadilly, was selected for the profitless, or certainly precarious, office of purveying ornaments to his royal highness. How important the function may be conceived, when this tradesman solemnly states that for many years not a single day passed without his spending some time at Carlton House, when articles of his profession were offered for selection.

* A pamphleteering parson named Withers assailed her in a series of libels, from which she had to seek the protection of the law. Her assailant was punished with fine and imprisonment.

† "Yet the statement was quite true," says Mrs. Harcourt, "and the remission was against the Duke of York's wishes, who was very violent. Jack Payne was Walter's greatest enemy."

‡ Huish states that he had this story from the pawnbroker himself. The substance, though vulgarly dressed up with additional "facts" from the writer's imagination, seems to be true.

One morning Jefferey received a visit from Mr. Weltjie, begging for a loan of £1600 on the part of the Prince to extricate Mrs. Fitzherbert, desiring to have it placed to the Prince's account. Mr. Jefferey found the cash, and attended on the following morning to announce that the debt was paid. Full of gratitude the Prince brought Mrs. Fitzherbert to his shop, to return her thanks in person. The money was repaid in three months. This was the beginning of many such transactions with this accommodating jeweller, and also, as will be seen later, of much discreditable disputes.

We next find the Prince at Frogmore, where he was "hardly civil to anyone, tho' he seemed to pay more court to the King. He did not speak to L^d Harcourt, to whom he had been very civil always during the King's late illness, until he was the first to tell him that the King w^d certainly recover—a characteristic touch. The Queen & Princesses this evening (that of September 20) were evidently afraid of him."* In October, at the Hunt, "the King made General Harcourt converse the whole time, as if to keep off the Prince, who does not speak to the General since the illness."† A general reconciliation with his family seemed therefore hopeless, and indeed the tone adopted by the Prince even in indifferent matters was not likely to encourage harmony. Thus the King, ever partial to music, was fond of giving Sunday evening parties, where he offered his guests the rational entertainment of good music and conversation. The Bishops, however, conceiving that this was "contrary to the spirit of the Sabbath," respectfully remonstrated, and with success. But it becoming known that his son also celebrated the Sunday with music and with more joviality than was becoming the day, he took the injudicious step not of speaking to the Prince, but of warning the nobility that he disapproved of their attendance at such performances. As was to be expected, the command was laughed at by all those who were not of the royal household, or not dependent on royalty for a pension; but at Carlton House and other places it became a standing joke, and with some of the party it was their regular custom to send to the Bishops who might be resident in London a polite invitation to a Sunday evening conversazione. There was, as usual, an edifying state of things and in the worst taste, and the blame must be not a little distributed.

It was during this year, too, that the Prince paid a visit to one who, without injustice, might be styled a notorious "rake," viz. Lord Sandwich. "Jemmy Twitcher," as he was called, belonged to an old generation of rakes, and had been little heard of since Miss

* "Mrs. Harcourt's Diary," p. 36.

† Ibid.

Ray's tragic end. The attraction would seem to have been the musical tastes of his host and the harmonious fare offered. His lordship had the odd taste to choose for his favourite instrument the drum ; and at his own concerts, when a full band was engaged, he always performed on that instrument. As Peter Pindar wrote : "He beats old Ashbridge on the kettledrum."

On this occasion, Madame Mara sang, and his royal highness "assisted on the violoncello." Generally there was a theatrical performance—"Fool à la Mode," "High Life Below Stairs," or some favourite piece ; while the evening wound up with catches and glees, in all of which the Prince was fond of taking a part. He had an excellent and a cultured voice, a greater distinction then than in our own time, when the study of music has been so diffused. He remained a week at this agreeable house, and on going away expressed his delight at the way he had been entertained.

In a glee, his royal highness could supply "the basso" with more good will than delicacy. On one of the evenings at the Pavilion (one of Sir P. Francis's daughters reports) his royal highness, after dinner, having proposed music, and being actively engaged in performing, with Mrs. Francis and some other persons, the pretty hunting trio of "Azioli," of which the burden is "*Ritornereмо a Clori*"—— But the story is amusing, and bears such a favourable testimony to the Prince's good humour, that the lady must be allowed to tell it herself.

"It is well known that, to an excessive love of music he added much real taste as an amateur, and some power as a performer ; but his execution was not particularly good, and Mr. Francis, Sir Philip's son, with whom he frequently sang, was sometimes comically struck by the loudness of his voice, and his peculiar manner. On one of the above-mentioned evenings at the Pavilion, his royal highness, after dinner, having proposed music, and being actually engaged in performing with Mr. Francis and some other person the pretty hunting trio of 'Azioli,' of which the burden is, '*Ritornereмо a Clori, al tramontar del di*,' Mr. Francis suddenly found the full face of the Prince, somewhat heated by the eagerness of his performance, in immediate contact with his own ; and this circumstance, combined with that of the loud bass tones in which his royal highness was singing the words '*Ritornereмо a Clori*,' striking him in some ludicrous point of view, he became absolutely unable to resist the effect on his nerves, and burst out laughing. The Prince evidently perceived that his own singing had produced the unseasonable laughter, but, instead of showing displeasure at a rudeness which, however

involuntary, would have been resented by many far less illustrious persons, he only called the offender to order with the words, 'Come, come, Philip!' his countenance betraying at the same time a strong inclination to join in the laugh himself; and the trio proceeded to a conclusion. Sir Philip (adds his daughter), by his original humour and great powers of conversation, was often the life of the Pavilion, though his temperate habits made the excesses occasionally committed at the Prince's table distasteful to him; and his royal host, perceiving him ready to drop asleep when the revels were long protracted, would say, 'We must carry grandpapa away to bed.'"

The same ready good humour is shown in a pleasant scene which took place at the Pavilion. Cricket was often played on the lawn, and the dinner which followed was served in a marquee. On one of those occasions, the Duke of York and Sheridan fell into dispute on some point of the game. Sheridan at length angrily told the Duke "that he was not to be talked out of his opinion there or anywhere else, and that at play all men were on a par." The Duke was evidently about to make some peculiarly indignant reply, when the Prince stood up and addressed them both.

"The narrator of the circumstance, a person of rank, who was present, himself one of the most attractive public speakers of the day, has often declared that he never, on any occasion, saw any individual under the circumstances acquit himself with more ability. The speech was of some length—ten or fifteen minutes; it was alternately playful and grave, expressed with perfect self-possession, and touching on the occurrences of the game, the characters of both disputants, and the conversation at the table, with the happiest delicacy and dexterity. Among other points the Prince made a laughing apology for Sheridan's unlucky use of the phrase 'on a par,' by bidding his brother remember that the impressions of school were not easily effaced, that Dr. Parr had inflicted learning upon Sheridan, and that, like the lover in 'The Wonder,' who mixes his mistress's name with everything, and calls to his valet, 'Roast me these Violantes,' the name of Parr was uppermost in Sheridan's sleep: he then ran into a succession of sportive quotations of the word *par*, in the style of *Ludere par impar, equitare in arundine longâ*, until the speech was concluded in general gaiety, and the dispute was thought of no more."*

During this season, too, he had witnessed some more private theatricals, performed before him at Richmond House, with

* Dr. Croly, "Life of George IV."

the following distinguished caste. The piece was Murphy's "Way to Keep Him":

Lovemore	Lord DERBY.
Sir Brilliant Fashion . . .	Hon. Mr. EDGECUMBE.
Sir Bashful Constant. . .	Major ARABIN.
William	Sir HARRY ENGLEFIELD.
Sideboard	Mr. CAMPBELL.
Widow Belmour	Hon. Mrs. HOBART.
Mrs. Lovemore	Hon. Mrs. DAMER.
Lady Constant	Miss CAMPBELL.
Muslin	Mrs. BRUCE.

The prologue was written by Mr. Conway, and spoken by the Hon. Mrs. Hobart.*

In February, 1788, the Prince had been initiated into Freemasonry, at the Star and Garter, Pall Mall. His Royal Highness the Duke of Cumberland, as Grand Master, the Duke of Norfolk, the Duke of Manchester, and several other noblemen attended the ceremony.

Meanwhile, the King's condition seemed to improve, and the fêtes still given in honour of his restoration continued to testify the affection borne him. The Spanish Ambassador's fête, given at Ranelagh, was one of the most magnificent of those galas, and was said to have cost £12,000. It was a fair specimen of all that money and labour could do in those days. A description may be quoted.

"The entrance into the rotunda (we are told) was formed into a shrubbery; the lower boxes represented a Spanish camp, and the gallery formed a temple of Flora. The Queen's box was of crimson satin, lined with white satin hung in festoons, and richly fringed with gold, at the top of which was a regal crown. The orchestra was a magnificent pavilion of white and gold, lined with green embroidered satin, in which was a table of eighteen covers for the royal family. Opposite the Queen's box was a small stage, on which a Spanish dance was performed by children, which had a pleasing effect. In another arch of the centre were beautiful moving transparencies; and in a third was a lottery of watches, gold trinkets, medals, etc., consisting of six hundred prizes, the number of ladies invited. The great prize, a gold watch richly ornamented with diamonds, fell to the lot of

* "Afterwards Countess of Berkshire, who, according to the fashion of the times, presided at a faro-table which was frequented by the Prince of Wales, and where on some evenings she gave her dramatic readings, in which she was assisted by that sprightly and witty barrister, the present Mr. Jekyll."—Huish.

Miss Eliza Sturt. Her Majesty drew an etwee-case, with a beautiful medallion of the King. An Ode, the words by Colonel Arabin, was sung; after which a red curtain drew up, and about thirty girls and boys, in Spanish dresses, entertained the company with Spanish dances. Her Majesty and the royal family then retired to the back part of their box, to view the fireworks from the garden. There were about twenty sailing-boats on the water, illuminated with lamps, which moved backwards and forwards, letting off sky-rockets. The fireworks were very grand, and well conducted."

All these entertainments were so many affronts to the Princes. At the Spanish minister's fête members of the party were said to have been excluded; and the Princes showed their feelings by quitting the room almost as soon as they entered it. At the French Ambassador's fête they noticed that the Queen "bowed graciously to Colonel Lenox," on which the royal brethren at once took their departure. The Princesses, whose position at such places must have been awkward, merely made their appearance and then went away, and during the dance the Princesses had to be led out by noblemen. A journey to the seaside, with visits to various great houses, was prescribed for the King, as well as some stay at his favourite Weymouth. The Princes set out on a progress of their own into Yorkshire and other places. It was hoped that the Prince of Wales would have waited on his father; but he despatched the Duke of York in his place with a letter, in the composition of which Sheridan and Fox, then staying at Brighton, had been concerned.

The Prince, as usual, preferred to hurry post from Brighton without stop, had stayed only a single day, and thence returned, sleeping in his chaise. He played a match of cricket there, then set off with his brother for the York races, where both were received by Lord Fitzwilliam at Wentworth. It was hardly surprising that the Duke, who had only just recovered from the measles, should have fallen sick again at York. For these wild courses a heavy price was to be paid later, in the sufferings that attend a life of excess.*

* On this tour or progress he was attended in all state by the Dukes of Bedford, Ancaster, and Queensberry, Lords Carlisle, Derby, Rawdon, and others. He won a stake at the York races, and received the freedom of the city. No wonder that Mr. Burke wrote to Fox—this was in August, 1789—"Things went off well in Yorkshire. I wish the Prince had staid a few days longer, to show himself to the manufacturing towns, which are the headquarters of the enemy. It is very probable that he might have dislodged them. However, as it was, the Northern excursion has been of use."

In returning to town he met with an accident: "About two miles

At Lord Fitzwilliam's a unique and truly magnificent display was contrived. The whole county round was bidden to the park, where all were entertained, and it was calculated that no less than twenty thousand persons were feasted: two hundred of the Yorkshire belles and Yorkshire "quality" sat at the table with the Prince.

As if to encourage him further in his reckless course of life, there now arrived in town his friend the Duke of Orleans—having left Paris on the eve of the Revolution. At Boulogne he had been seized and detained by the fishermen, and was only allowed to depart after infinite difficulty. A house had been taken for him in town. The Prince put off a visit he was about paying to Holkham to "Coke of Norfolk," to entertain the Duke. The Prince and his brother were at their favourite jeweller's, when they encountered their French friends. But there presently arose a coldness between them, when the behaviour of the French Prince to King Louis XVI. became known; the Duke of York declined meeting him at entertainments; while it was remarked that at the Prince of Wales's ball given to Prince Galitzin the Duke of Orleans was not present.

The summer had been spent at Brighton with more than usual frivolity. Mr. Fox was on a visit with him, and both repaired to Lewes races, where the Prince was welcomed by the High Sheriff, attended by "the whole population as javelin men," a most grotesque spectacle. Here, too, were seen three ladies, distinguished by their rather eccentric equipages—the Duchess of Rutland, Lady Lade, and Mrs. Fitzherbert—each in a carriage drawn by four gay ponies.*

In January, 1790, we find the gay Prince, as previously stated, north of Newark, a cart crossing the road struck the axle of the Prince's coach and overturned it. It was on the verge of a slope, and the carriage fell a considerable way, turned over twice, and was shivered to pieces. There were in the coach along with him, Lord Clermont, Colonel St. Leger, and Colonel Lake. The Prince suffered a slight contusion in the shoulder, and his wrist was sprained. Being undermost in the first fall, by the next roll of the carriage he was brought uppermost, when, with great presence of mind, he disengaged himself, and was the first to rescue and disengage his fellow-travellers. Lord Clermont was the most hurt. The accident happened at ten o'clock at night, and it was clear moonlight. The carriage was his royal highness's own travelling-coach, with hired horses and postilions; and the mischance was occasioned by the wilfulness of the postilions, who drove to clear the cart with their common precipitation."

* Lady Lade was scarcely company for the other ladies, but she enjoyed the Prince's patronage, which, however, did not avail to protect her. For when on the night of the race ball she stood up for the dance, her appearance was greeted with loud murmurs, and a voice from the crowd called out, "Lady Lade's carriage stops the way!" on which she retired.

at Lord Barrymore's, at Wargrave, where he remained three days, and was entertained with plays and a masked ball. But this disorderly celebration was to be further marked by accident, an unfortunate coachman being flung from his box in a collision, and killed on the spot. Then followed in the same month a magnificent ball at Carlton House, to about two hundred of the chief personages. It was a private entertainment, being given in honour of Prince Galitzin, who "wished to see an English country dance." At the close of the night he was introduced to English gaming. Captain Payne was said to have won a thousand guineas at faro. But presently the public must have been a little surprised to learn that after the bitter animosity that reigned between the Prince and his father, a reconciliation had taken place between them. This was believed to have been brought about by Lord Thurlow, with whom the Prince had continued to be exceedingly intimate, taking delight in his rough jests and coarse abuse of the people they both disliked. "You, sir," Lord Thurlow would tell him in his rough way, "will never be popular; your father is, because he is faithful to that ugly woman your mother." It was noted that the Prince now received and invited persons without distinction of party. Reconciliation with the Queen presently followed, brought about, it was said, through the agency of the Dukes of Leeds and Richmond, though the Princess Royal had been unwearied in her efforts to attain this end. This happy event took place in March, 1791. "A gentleman, who lives at the east end of St. James' Park," wrote Mr. Walpole, "has been sent by a lady who has a large house at the west end, and they have kissed and are friends, which he notified by toasting her health in a bumper at a club the other day."* It would seem that the feelings of the Prince had not gone with this becoming act, and that he still nourished a sense of injury.

He was still carrying on a correspondence with his friend, Lord Cornwallis, in an effusive vein, and which that nobleman received in almost dry fashion, as some unreasonable request for a place or patronage was always presented. The style should be noted.

THE PRINCE OF WALES TO LORD CORNWALLIS.

"Carlton House, April 16th, 1790.

"MY DEAR LORD,

"It is so long since I had the pleasure of hearing from You y^t I am quite afraid You have forgot Your old Friends on this side of the Water, therefore think it high time to assure You y^t there are a few of us who have had the pleasure of passing

* "Letters," ix. 299.

many pleasant & happy Hours in y^r Society, whoever are most happy in hearing, be it ever such short Letters, y^t You are well and situated to y^r Satisfaction. By this time You must have heard of the treatment—the shameful, unjust treatment—our little worthy Friend Lothian has experienced from the Minister. I would expatiate more upon this Subject, was it not so perfectly of a piece with everything y^t had been inflicted, not only upon other individuals, but upon every relative and relation of the King's Family who acted from principles of disinterested honor, y^t had it not happened, one might have been astonished y^t for once, the natural mean, paltry, and revengeful disposition of the Minister did not demonstrate itself in the odious and impressive light, which now it has in every instance in w^h either could or dared give it vent. I will not, my dear Lord, intrude further upon y^r time, as I know how much it must naturally, from y^r situation, be taken up; however, before I conclude, I must just mention to You how much I wish to recommend to y^r protection Young Mr. Watts, who is, I believe, in the Company's service. I understood y^t his wish is, if possible, to get equal Rank in the Regulars, to y^t which he has in the Company's troops. I do not know whether this is an easy matter to be done or not. I must leave it entirely to you, my dear Lord, to y^r better judgment and knowledge of the possibility of effecting these matters; however, I only hope y^t sh^d this plan not be possible to be arranged, you will employ the Young Man in some other line to w^h You may deem he has abilities. Pray excuse hurry and scrawl, and believe me, my dear Lord,

“Ever most truly Y^r Friend,

“G. P.”

“Carlton House, May 11th, 1791.

“MY DEAR LORD,

“Allow me to return you my thanks for the Letter I last week received from you. We had, about a fortnight before, received the accounts of Colonel Floyd's affair, & regretted much that so much bravery had not been crowned with more success, at least with a more signal victory. My Brother is gone, upon the report of War, to attend the Prussian Army, in case there sh^d be any service to be seen, and sh^d there not, then to return to England when the grand Reviews are over. As to Topics, there are so few except the French Revolution and the prospect of a War with Russia, with both of w^h you must be so much better informed about by other persons than I can pretend to do with mine, y^t I will not even take up your time with mentioning the subject. I have had the pleasure of seeing lately a great deal of

my old friend Singleton, whom I had not seen hardly since he has had the honor of being related to your Lordship; & having taken a house in Hampshire about fifteen miles from mine, he now & then rides over in order to meet my Hounds, when they throw off within a distance of ten or a dozen miles from him; & all I can say is, I flatter myself, when he has the honor to be as well known by your Lordship as he is by me, he will gain the same place in y^r esteem y^t I confess he long has done in mine. Before I conclude, allow me to mention y^t the Young Man who will have the honor of delivering this Letter to y^r L^{dship} is a young man whose Brother, thro' the interest of my friend Lushington, I have got the permission of the Company to be a Free Merchant. I formerly recommended him to You, & his name is Coleman, and I flatter myself he will always merit y^r support & approbation by his industry and diligence. The young man himself is coming out as a Cadet, & I can only add y^t any attention & assistance you are so good as to show him on my account, I shall attribute to the source of that friendship w^h I hope I shall always experience from you.

"I am, My Dear Lord, Most Sincerely Yours,
"G. P."

Lord Cornwallis's answers to this and other rambling effusions offer a curious contrast. They are rather cold and stiff, and even seem to rebuke the want of propriety in abusing the King to the King's officer. He wrote that "he felt the strongest disinclination to enter on that unpleasant topic of the Regency." No one could love or admire his royal highness more, but "he was a determined friend to the liberties of his country and the prerogatives of the Crown," and had he been in the country he would have felt it his duty to have opposed the Duke of York. For one of the Prince's *protégés* he would have to displace an old judge. This could not be done. Neither could he say whether, during his term of office, he would be able to do anything for him. He complained to Lord Southampton of persons actually not in the Company being sent out by the Prince. Mr. Colebrook had arrived in this way with all his family "on the chance." Lord Cornwallis plainly told him he could do nothing for him. He said that he had been advised to come by Sir T. Macpherson, the Prince's friend.*

* "Cornwallis Cor." *passim*.

CHAPTER XXII.

1791.

It can scarcely be understood how passionate and successful a follower of racing was the Prince of Wales. Nothing, indeed, more completely disposes of the conventional idea of his character that he was a frivolous being without talents and engrossed in pleasure. To be successful in this sport requires, as is well known, qualities of judgment, sagacity, and calculation, with the power of analysing experience and turning it to profit. No one of his time had so genuine a love for horses, and no one had "a finer eye for them," says the author of "Post and Paddock." Hacks and hunters he never seemed tired of trying, and the dealers, like the jewellers, were always welcome. At Carlton House, Mat Milton's refrain, "Throw your thigh over him, your Highness, and you'll find him to be the sweetest goer you ever mounted," was invariably responded to. Hunting to a man who latterly weighed more than twenty-three stone was, of course, out of the question, but when he was able to don his blue coat with gilt buttons and top-boots and buckskins, he cared very little what Milton or any other dealer chose to ask for a clever hack. It used to be a saying at Brighton that, heavy as he was, he rode so well that he never soiled his nankeens.* He used to hunt with Mr. Villebois's hounds in Hampshire, and the plumes still appear on the Club button.

It was during this period (1788 to 1791) that he was most partial to hunting, though it was admitted that he was never what was called a forward rider. As we have seen, he had hunted in Hampshire. We are told "Colonel Leigh was then in

* "Post and Paddock," p. 108.

high favour; and George Sharpe was for some short time his huntsman, although before long superseded by a man named Granston, who was dismissed only by death from the service of the Prince. His hounds showed as fair a proportion of sport as could be expected from the flints and woods of Hampshire; the country, however, does not, and never did, rank high even in the list of provincials; and other *agréments*, besides the facility of hunting, had no doubt their weight in detaining his royal master as a resident. No party bickerings, no sporting squabbles were at any time heard; and the whole country resembled one large and happily united family, of which their distinguished visitor was looked up to and adored as the august and beloved head. Often, no doubt, amidst the domestic troubles of his after-days, did the Prince look back with a sad satisfaction and sorrow on the quiet privacy and tranquil enjoyment of the regretted sojourn at the Grange, which, then or later, belonged to Lord Ashburton. His hounds came from Goodwood, where they had long formed the kennel of the grandfather of the present Duke of Richmond; and amongst his horses were not a few thoroughbred ones, who had distinguished themselves on the turf, yet were notwithstanding equal to his weight. Amongst these were Curricule, Asparagus, Totteridge, and Torbay." In 1790, however, we find him at Critchill, the seat of Mr. Sturt, and where recently the present heir-apparent was entertained. Here he entered thoroughly into the enjoyment of rustic life, and kept himself rather secluded.

Mr. Chafin—a quaint hunting divine—describes in an admirable sporting book, now forgotten, but which has the flavour of the "History of Selborne," how the Prince called on him. One morning he was surprised to receive a visit from his royal highness, who was in great excitement, desiring an information to be taken for robbery, and that a search-warrant be granted to him. "He insisted," says the clergyman naïvely, "on my administering the oath to him, which I reluctantly did; and then described how his groom's box had been broken open and a watch and other valuables stolen." He suspected certain persons, and chose to come himself lest the alarm should be taken. He sat by Mr. Chafin while the warrant was being filled up, and it was a circumstance of great satisfaction to him that the goods were found where he had suspected them to be.*

Another hunting parson, the Rev. W. Butler, and a friend of Mr. Chafin's, used to describe a rencontre with the Prince. Returning home after a blank day in the Vale he was joined by a gentleman who, entering into conversation, began to ask questions

* "Cranbourne Chace." A book after Lamb's own heart which should be reprinted.

about the neighbours, and more particularly about one gentleman, who, he had heard, could despatch three bottles of port at a sitting. This the clergyman thought little of, and declared he could be "as drunk as a Prince." As he rode away the Prince declared that this was the first time he had learned that a person of that rank was to be taken as the standard of inebriety. Mr. Butler presently discovered who his companion had been. Many years afterwards, when the Prince was Regent, he was advised to go to Court, and when his name was announced the Prince was heard to mutter: "I shan't forget the Rev. William Butler!" Sometime afterwards he, unsolicited, presented him with a Crown living.

"Jack" Radford was his groom, having come to him from "Old Q.," in whose service he had filled the curious function of waiting in Piccadilly, mounted on a fleet pony, to ride after anyone whom the decayed old Duke espied passing by. This familiar was often heard to declare, that horses were the sole subject of the Prince's thoughts, even of his dreams. If he fancied a racer he would buy him at any price, as when Lord Darlington had bid 1100 guineas for an animal at Lord H. Fitzroy's sale, he was told it was no use going on, as the King had instructed Mr. Delmé Ratcliffe to secure the mare at any price. "Indeed he was most liberal with money, as long as he did not see it. Cheques he would sign away to any amount; even £300 for 'Pea-green Haynes's' dressing-box. But when he had a fifty-pound note in his pocket it was a bitter pang to him to spend £5 of it."*

To Newmarket he was particularly partial, and his colours were always to be found there. The scene at the races, when the Prince and the men on the turf visited, is pleasantly described by a lively, witty lady (Miss Berry), and reveals more the idea of a foreign racecourse than the crowded tumultuous scene an English race now presents.

"Newmarket Heath is entered by a turnpike at what is called the Devil's Ditch, a high mound, with a deep ditch of turf below, extending for several miles, of which no account is given, and which is in fact a curious antiquity. The inn is almost opposite what are called the Rooms, where men only meet, and which have rather a handsome entrance of three arcades from the street, and in this street Tattersall was selling horses by auction, and all the young men whose faces one knows in London were walking about, as well as all the fathers of the turf, such as Sir Frank Standish, Sir Charles Bunbury, etc. etc. It had the oddest

* "Post and Paddock," p. 109.

effect possible to see so many figures one hardly ever sees out of London walking about in a sort of village-town, for Newmarket is no more, with the exception of some good houses. About one o'clock all these men mounted their horses, and proceeded towards the Heath, half a mile from the town. We followed them in the carriage, with many other carriages, and Lord Hardwicke on horseback. The scene of so many horsemen and a good many people on foot, all trooping the same way, very gay and pretty. When they got upon the Heath, it is so vast that they seemed only like small groups upon it. It was said to be a day of little sport. But four races were run: two subscriptions, for each of which six horses started; and two matches. But the style in which all this is managed here, the rapidity with which one race follows another, though on different courses—that is, on different parts of the Heath—the scene at the betting-post, one of which belongs to each course, and is the only permanent thing upon it, for the ropes are immediately moved, and the winning-post (a little machine upon wheels) is moved from one to the other. All this was new and entertaining to me. Between each race all the men and all the carriages are collected at the betting-posts. Just before the horses start, the carriages take their places near the ropes, and the crowd on horseback disperse from the post. As soon as the horses are past, all the men follow them to the rubbing-house to see them rubbed down, and their clothes put on. The rubbing-house, stables, etc. etc., are little insignificant buildings, which occupy no space and take off nothing from the extreme bareness of the Heath. Stand there is none. The ladies are all in their carriages. There were more than I expected to see there. The fashionable custom at Newmarket is, to have the plainest carriage and liveries possible, and the gentlemen all to be mounted upon shabby-looking ribs of horses. The races were over between three and four."

At the very outset of his career, in 1788, he had won the Derby. From this time until 1792, when he first retired from the turf, he was so fortunate, Lord William Lennox tells us, as to win a hundred and eighty-five races, including eighteen King's Plates, with a valuable stake now and then of three or four thousand guineas. Adding the prizes together he will be found to have won about £30,000; but the cost of his stud was stated to have been some £30,000 a year.

"His first race was won at Newmarket, with Anvil, for a stake of £60; and his stud, which then consisted of four or five horses, gradually amounted to forty-one in 1791. From 1800 to 1807 he won a hundred and seven races, and in the latter year he was

most fortunate, winning twenty-six races. According to Lord W. Lennox's calculations, he won altogether about three hundred and thirteen races in twenty years."*

His favourite jockey was "Sam Chifney," of whom and of whose family many traditions linger at Newmarket, but who is best known from his connection with the Escape transaction. This unfortunate incident we shall now describe.

"This well-known horse was bred by the Prince himself, and, when his stud was sold off in 1787, was purchased by Mr. Francis.† In 1789 the Prince bought him back for the sum of £1500.

On the 20th of October, 1791, Escape, then reckoned the best horse upon the turf, was beaten at Newmarket by two horses of inferior reputation. The odds now changed against him, and it was the general opinion of the sporting world that he would lose the match he had to run the next day. Accordingly bets were made to a large amount, and with great odds, that Escape would lose; but contrary to the opinion, and much to the disappointment of the knowing ones, Escape won his race."

Chifney, who rode Escape on these two days, published a pamphlet, a short time before his death, entitled "Genius

* "In order," says Mr. Huish, "that a correct opinion may be formed of the success of his royal highness during the year 1791, we subjoin the following list of winners belonging to him:

"Mademoiselle, by Diomed, 660 guineas, at Newmarket.

"Devi Sing, by Eclipse, 150 guineas and £50 at Lewes.

"Don Quixote, by Eclipse, 100 guineas and £50 at Newmarket.

"Pegasus, by Eclipse, the King's Plate at Newmarket, and 140 guineas at Stockbridge.

"Serpent, by Eclipse, 80 guineas at Brighton, 60 guineas, and the Ladies' Plate at Lewes.

"Amelia, by Highflyer, the Third Class of the Filly Stakes, 1000 guineas, and 300 guineas at Newmarket and the Prince's Stakes at Ascot.

"Escape, by Highflyer, 250 guineas, 1000 guineas, 140 guineas, and 55 guineas, at Newmarket.

"Traveller, by Highflyer, 400 guineas, at Newmarket.

"St. David, by Saltram, the Second Class of the Prince's Stakes, at Newmarket.

"Creeper, by Tandem, 50 guineas at Newmarket, 60 guineas at Burford, and the King's Plates at Lichfield and Burford.

"Baronet, by Vertumnus, the Oatlands Stakes at Ascot, and the King's Plates at Winchester, Lewes, Canterbury, and Newmarket.

"Clementina, by Vertumnus, £50 at Swaffham, and 200 guineas at Newmarket."

† One night the horse thrust his foot through the woodwork of his stall, and was extricated without injury, and to the astonishment of the trainer, who could only exclaim, "What an escape!" which at once suggested the name.

Genuine, by Samuel Chifney, of Newmarket; containing a full account of the Prince's horse Escape, running at Newmarket on the 20th and 21st days of October, 1791"—in which he very satisfactorily accounted for Escape's losing his first and winning his second race. On the first day's race, Escape, he said, for want of proper exercise, was not in a fit condition to run; that the exercise had opened his pores, and enabled him to perform better on the second day. But this was far from satisfactory to the gentlemen of the turf, and a rumour was propagated that Escape had run unfairly on the first day's race. It was reported that his royal highness got the grooms out of the way, and had given the horse a pail of water just before he had to run, and of course the horse was winded and easily beaten.

"As I came from scale," says Chifney, "I was told that Mr. W. Lake (brother to Lord Viscount Lake, and the gentleman who had the management of the Prince of Wales's running horses) had been saying something improper to his royal highness concerning Escape's winning; I made it, therefore, my business to go immediately to his royal highness, who was riding with a gentleman near to the Great Stand House, and he immediately accosted me in the following words: 'Sam Chifney, as soon as Escape's race was over, Mr. Lake came up to me, and said, "I give your Royal Highness joy; but I am sorry the horse has won, I would sooner have given a hundred guineas." I told Mr. Lake that I did not understand him—that he must explain himself.' I then answered his royal highness, saying, 'Yes, your Royal Highness; it is very necessary that he should explain himself.' This is all that passed on the subject to-day.

"On the morning after the race, his royal highness sent for me into his dressing-room, and then ordered me to be shown into an adjoining room, where he thus accosted me: 'Sam Chifney, I have sent for you on some very unpleasant business. I am told, Sam Chifney, that you won six or seven hundred pounds upon the race on the day before yesterday, when you rode Escape, and were beaten upon him.' I replied, that I believed his royal highness had not such an opinion of me.

"His royal highness continued: 'I am told, Sam Chifney, that you won six or seven hundred pounds upon the race yesterday, when you rode Escape, and won upon him; and I am told that Vauxhall Clark'—clerk of the stables to the Prince of Wales—'won all the money for you.' I answered, 'May I not offend by asking who it was that dared to tell your Royal Highness so?'

"His royal highness replied, 'Sam Chifney, I wish to know whether you have any objection to take your affidavit, naming

all the bets you had upon the race, every way, when you rode Escape, and was beaten upon him on the day before yesterday?' I acknowledged my readiness to do it, if it would give his royal highness any satisfaction.

"His royal highness said, 'Sam Chifney, your doing it will give yourself satisfaction, it will give the public satisfaction, it will give me satisfaction. You will specify in your affidavit all the bets you had upon both days' races, when that you rode Escape on the day before yesterday, and was beaten upon him; and yesterday when that you rode Escape and won upon him; naming all the bets you had upon both those races, and to take your affidavit as such. I hope, Sam Chifney, you do not misunderstand me.' I answered that I did perfectly understand, and that I would take care to do as his royal highness had ordered me.

"His royal highness said, 'Sam Chifney, I wish to know if you have any objection against being examined by the Jockey Club, and in any way that they are pleased to think proper.' To which I most fully and freely consented. His royal highness said: 'I am told, Sam Chifney, that you were arrested at Ascot Heath for three hundred pounds, and that Vauxhall Clark paid the money for you.' I replied that this was the first word I had ever heard upon the subject. His royal highness said: 'Sam Chifney, I wish to know if you have any objection to make an affidavit that you were not arrested at Ascot Heath, and that Vauxhall Clark did not pay three hundred pounds for you?' I replied to his royal highness: 'I am very willing to do it.'

"On the same morning (22nd of October, 1791), his royal highness called me across the betting-ring. I instantly obeyed his commands, and his royal highness put me between himself and Sir Charles Bunbury, and then rode out upon the Heath. After his royal highness and Sir Charles had talked upon the subject, his royal highness said, 'Sam Chifney, I think you told me that you were willing to be examined by the stewards of the Jockey Club in any way they should think proper?' I said, 'Your Royal Highness, I am proud to meet any man upon the subject.' His royal highness then addressed himself to Sir Charles Bunbury. 'There, Sir Charles, you hear him say that he is proud to meet any man upon the subject. Now, Sir Charles, I beg of you to take every pains you possibly can so as to make yourself perfectly satisfied; and then enclose me Sam Chifney's affidavits, and apprise me how the business ends, as I am going to Brighton to-night.' His royal highness left Sir Charles and rode near the betting-ring, where, after he had

stood a little while, he said, 'Sam Chifney, this business should be explained.' I answered, 'Your Royal Highness, I don't know how to explain it.' His royal highness then rode off the turf to town, before the day's sport was finished, and I immediately went home. Soon after this I received from Mr. Weatherby, clerk to the Jockey Club, copies of affidavits which I swore before the Rev. Dr. Frampton, naming that I had no bet upon the race when I rode Escape on the 20th of October, 1791, and that I had twenty guineas, and no more, betted upon Escape on the following day, when I rode him on the 21st of October, 1791, and that I had the same desire of winning upon Escape when I rode him on the 20th of October, 1791, as I had when I rode him on the following day, the 21st of October, 1791; and further, that I had never been arrested on Ascot Heath, and that Mr. Vauxhall Clark never did pay any money for me. When I had sworn these affidavits, they were signed by the Rev. Dr. Frampton, and I immediately returned them to Mr. Weatherby.

"I was then had up before the stewards of the Jockey Club, who were Sir Charles Bunbury, Bart., Ralph Dutton, Esq., and Thomas Panton, Esq.

Sir Charles Bunbury asked me some few questions: What bets I had upon the first day's race when I rode Escape on the 20th of October, 1791; and what bets I had upon the race when I rode Escape on the following day, when he won, and who made my bets for me? I answered that I had no bets upon the first day's race; that I betted twenty guineas upon Escape the next day, and no more; and that Vauxhall Clark betted for me. Sir Charles Bunbury then proceeded to ask me what was my motive for waiting with Escape on the first day.

"I told Sir Charles Bunbury that he was a wrong judge of his man.

"Sir Charles Bunbury now stopped, and looked about apparently dissatisfied.

"Mr. Dutton said, 'I think Chifney spoke very fairly.'

"Mr. Panton immediately said, 'Yes, very fairly.'

"Sir Charles Bunbury did not ask me any more questions.

"I then said to Sir Charles and the two other gentlemen that my motive for waiting with Escape was because I knew he could run very fast; I likewise knew Skylark could run fast, though a jade, for I had ridden against him most of the races he had run. I was now dismissed, and this is everything that passed with me from and to the Prince of Wales, Mr. W. Lake, and the Jockey Club, on this subject at Newmarket.

"Some weeks after this, and I well remember that it was

after the Duke of York's coming from abroad with the duchess, Sir John Lade wrote to me at Newmarket for me to attend on the Prince immediately. I went to Carlton House directly, and the Prince of Wales told me that Sir Charles Bunbury came to him and told him that if he suffered Chifney to ride his horses no gentleman would start against him. His royal highness said, he told Sir Charles Bunbury that if he or any other person could make it appear that Sam Chifney had done wrong, then he would never speak to him again; and without that he would not sacrifice him to any person. His royal highness then said he should leave the turf, as he could not be guilty of that ingratitude to let his horses go over for the forfeits, after being told that no gentleman would start against him, but that he should pay the forfeits, and leave the turf. His royal highness then said he could see the meaning of it. 'They think you, Sam Chifney, a good rider, and they think you have won a race or two for me that you had no business to have won; and that there are others who wish to have you, and others who think you too good for me, as they know you will not see me robbed.' His royal highness then told me he should always be glad to see me, and for my own sake to let him see me often; and that if he ever kept horses again, I should train and manage them. After this I was ordered to attend on his royal highness at Sir John Lade's, in Piccadilly, which I did; and in the presence of Sir John Lade and Mr. Phillips, his royal highness put his hand upon his bosom and said that he believed Sam Chifney had been to him very honest, and wished me to understand that the two hundred guineas a year he gave me was for his life, saying, 'I cannot give it for your life, I can only give it for my own life.' I bowed to his royal highness, and said I was well satisfied."

In 1802, Chifney adds, that at the Brighton and Lewes race time, as the Prince of Wales was walking on the Steyne, having hold of a gentleman's arm, he approached and told his royal highness that they cried out very much for him at Newmarket. His royal highness said: "Sam Chifney, there has never been a proper apology made; and they used me and you very ill; they are a bad people; I'll not set my foot on the ground any more."*

This unpleasant affair seems to have arisen from the disappointment of Lake, one of his own suite, who behaved very faithlessly to his master. Having lost on the race he started the objection. In another account the Prince is described as being deeply wounded by the speech, and replied: "I did not expect

* Huish, i. 275.

this from you.”* Colonel St. Leger told Lord Malmesbury that Lake was the whole cause of the Newmarket affair, and that he had behaved very ill towards the Prince.† This, however, terminated his connection with Newmarket, which nothing would ever induce him to visit again. In 1805 a meeting of the members of the Jockey Club was held at Brighton during the races. The result was the following resolution, unanimously carried: “May it please your Royal Highness, the members of the Jockey Club, deeply regretting your absence from Newmarket, earnestly entreat the affair may be buried in oblivion, and sincerely hope that the different meetings may again be honoured by your Royal Highness’s condescending attendance.” This document was submitted to the Prince, who received it graciously, and, in his reply, signified his intention of assenting to it, but never carried his intention into effect. To Ascot, however, he was to the last partial. When in later years he was induced by an earnest and affectionate appeal from his racing friends to renew his connection with them, he gave a Jockey Club dinner, which was marked by graceful freedom, speechifying, and conviviality.

* “Life and Times of George IV.” i. 226.

† “Diaries,” ii. 452.

CHAPTER XXIII.

1790—1793.

DURING this time the wild Duke of York kept pace with his brother—gambling, playing tennis with blacklegs, and squandering recklessly. “We are not popular,” wrote Lord Southampton, “less so than our elder brother; yet there is always a stronghold with the father.” His state was truly pitiable, and the only resource that offered for extrication was marriage.

It was unfortunate that the King and his family should have always pressed this notable remedy on all their dissipated children, making it take the odious shape of a condition precedent to any relief from their difficulties. During the Duke’s long absence in Germany he had opportunities of seeing the Princess Frederica, Princess Royal of Prussia, and since his return had corresponded with her. An alliance was now arranged; his brother, the Prince of Wales, entered very cordially into the idea, and was considered to have “behaved very well.” “He has put in,” says Sir G. Elliot, “a saving clause for himself, in case he chooses to marry, which he thinks probable, if he sees his brother happy with his wife, and told the King that had he permitted him to go abroad at the time he asked leave to do so, he meant to have looked out for a princess who would have suited him, as he was too domestic to bear the thoughts of marrying a woman he did not like.”*

We who have heard his conversation with Lord Malmesbury at the time alluded, know how far this was from the truth, though it was no doubt spoken in good faith; an instance of that self-delusion in which he was wont to indulge.

* “Life and Letters of Sir G. Elliot,” i. 293.

It would appear he formed a plan of meeting his brother abroad at Coblenz, but this was given up. Like all his schemes, it seems to have been an incoherent idea arising out of his difficulties. He had actually despatched Lord Malmesbury to his brother with a proposal that he should raise a loan at Berlin. The spectacle of a prince coming to wed a foreign bride, and using the opportunity of his visit to raise money among her countrymen, was not a dignified one; and in this view Lord Malmesbury was employed on a sort of mission of which he gave an account to the Duke of Portland, who seems to have favoured the scheme.*

The wedded pair were welcomed by the Prince "with that unaffected grace for which he was always pre-eminently distinguished." The next proceeding was a re-marriage before the King,† on account of a legal quibble arising out of the royal marriage, matters having been so awkwardly arranged that the marriage had taken place at Berlin on the day after the King's consent had passed the Great Seal; but the Act required that it should be set out in the licence and register, which, of course, could not appear at Berlin.

On the King and Queen's visit to the royal couple, some odd ceremonies were noted: "The royal party were led to the lower apartment, fronting the park, where tea was served, and the following ceremony observed: the Prince of Wales, in the first place, was to attend on the King and hand to him the tea, which was brought to the door by the servants, then taken by the servants of the Duke's establishment, who handed the trays to the Prince of Wales, and his royal highness then attended upon his Majesty. The Duke of York received other tea-trays through the same channels, and handed them to the Duchess of York, who was to wait on the Queen." Another of the royal brothers was not treated so handsomely.

The story of the unfortunate Prince Edward is perhaps not well known. Few royal princes passed so wretched a life. Like his brothers, he had been despatched out of his native country when eighteen, under charge of a military pedant, named Baron Wangenheim, with an allowance of £1000 a year, which the latter was to control. Coming to Geneva his allowance was increased to £6000 a year; but it is said that only a guinea and a half per week was paid to him by his instructor. Incurring debts, and disgusted by the treatment he was receiving, he left Geneva without leave and hurried to England, where he arrived in 1790. The anger of the King was excessive: he refused to see him. In

* Lord Malmesbury, "Diaries," p. 438.

† Huish, i. 302.

vain the Prince of Wales and the Duke of York implored indulgence for him; and after a fortnight's delay the only communication he received was a peremptory order that he should embark for Gibraltar at a day's notice. A hurried and ungracious interview with his father was vouchsafed him, and £500 given to the captain of the ship for his wants. The rest of his life was made wretched by struggles with pecuniary embarrassments, of which he was to have the family share. He was sent about to various places in the colonies, and did not return to England until the year 1799, when he was heavily in debt. He had now been created Duke of Kent. In 1802 he was appointed Governor of Gibraltar, where his attempts to reform the habits of the garrison led to a mutiny, the object of which was to put the Prince on board a vessel and send him back to England. All the capricious changes of place to which he had been exposed entailed no less than seven equipments at a cost of some £50,000, which he had never been paid for, and which the Government refused to pay. By the year 1807 his debts amounted to the respectable sum of £108,200. Nothing, however, would be done for him by any party or Government, as he was a respectable and long-suffering creature.

It is curious that his brother William ("the sailor prince"), who had been sent to sea, should have ventured on similar insubordination, and which was as sternly dealt with. In 1786 he had been given the command of the *Pegasus*, a ship of twenty-eight guns, and had earned the high praise of Nelson, a man not likely to pay compliments. In a letter to Captain Locker, he writes: "In his professional line, he is superior to nearly two-thirds, I am sure, of the list, and in attention to orders, and respect to his superior officer, I hardly know his equal. His royal highness keeps up strict discipline in his ship, and without paying him any compliment, she is one of the finest-ordered frigates I have seen."

When his ship was ordered to Quebec he did not relish being imprisoned in the St. Lawrence river for a whole winter, and without ceremony or orders, brought her home. Anchoring at Cork, he sent a sort of justificatory letter to the Duke of Richmond, who had been Lord-Lieutenant. He was just dead. The Prince at once received orders to go to Plymouth. The King and his Council assembled, and the insubordinate, when about to set off for London, received peremptory orders to remain with his ship. The Admiralty, after deliberation, required him to serve his proper period at that port, and at its expiration he was ordered away to the West Indies. Such was the spirit in which the service was administered.

There was yet another son, whose adventures abroad were to excite the displeasure of his father.

The history of the private marriages of the four brothers really makes up four little romances—romances like so many other romances, owing to restriction and “tyranny.”

In the year 1792, Prince Frederick Augustus, sixth son of the King of England, was on his travels in Italy. He was then only nineteen, and, according to precedent, was under care of a governor. His health had been so delicate from his birth, that the air of England was found too severe for his system, and he had scarcely lived there at all. He was, indeed, almost virtually a German; for he was born at Hanover and educated in Germany. Rome was then, as indeed it was through the last century, one of the gayest of capitals—full of princes, dukes, wits, and adventurers; and among the English “persons of quality” found there during the winter of 1792 was the Countess of Dunmore and her family, which was a large one. The Earl was governor of one of the American provinces, and was absent at his duties. One of the daughters was Lady Augusta Murray, a young lady of great attractions, by whom the Prince, who mixed a great deal in English society, was quite fascinated.

“The well-known accomplishments of my wife,” wrote the Duke later, “caught my peculiar attention. After four months’ intimacy, by which I got more particularly acquainted with all her endearing qualities, I offered her my hand unknown to her family, being certain beforehand of the objections Lady Dunmore would have made me, had she been informed of my intentions. The candour and generosity my wife showed on this occasion, by refusing the proposal and showing me the personal disadvantages I should draw on myself, instead of checking my endeavours, served only to add new fuel to a passion which already no earthly power could make me resign.”

This warm attachment, thus inaugurated, was of course evident to Lady Dunmore; but she could hardly have conceived that it would have had such a termination. Unknown to her, the lovers proceeded, according to the old-fashioned canons which then obtained, to bind themselves by solemn written engagements; and the royal *innamorato* insisted on drawing up and signing the following singular document, which he presented to his flame:

“On my knees before God our Creator, I, Augustus Frederick, promise thee, Augusta Murray, and swear upon the Bible, as I hope for salvation in the world to come, that I will take thee, Augusta Murray, for my wife, for better, for worse, for richer,

for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish, till death us do part, to love but thee only, and none other; and may God forget me if I ever forget thee! The Lord's name be praised; so bless me, so bless me, O God! And with my handwriting do I, Augustus Frederick, this sign, March 21st, 1793, at Rome, and put my seal to it and my name.

"L.S.

(Signed) AUGUSTUS FREDERICK."

There was a clergyman of the English Church then in Rome named Gunn; and this gentleman was indiscreet enough to listen to the Prince's proposal that he should marry them. Knowing the despotic character of the King, who exercised a family authority that was quite German, it was surprising that a British subject could have been found daring enough to take part in such an adventure. Moreover, the severe Marriage Act, passed only a few years before with a most discreditable obsequiousness, was in itself intended as a menace. Notwithstanding all this, the clergyman entertained the proposal. The lady was said to be six or seven years older than the Prince, which was perhaps the only awkward element in the case—for her, at least; otherwise, her manner of meeting his proposals was very natural and engaging. The Prince stated that he would press the clergyman to consent by urging that his honour was involved, an idea which the lady thus combats:

"Then, my treasure, you say you will talk of honour to him. There is no honour in the case; if there is, I will not marry you. I love you, and I have reason to hope and believe you love me; but honour in the sense you take it is out of the question. I cannot bear to owe my happiness to anything but affection; and all promises, though sacred in our eyes and those of Heaven, shall not oblige you to do anything towards me that can in the least prejudice your future interests. As for honour, with the meaning Mr. Gunn will annex to it, I am ashamed to fancy it; he will imagine I have been your mistress, and that humanity, commonly termed honour, now induces you to pity me, and so veil my follies by an honourable marriage. My own beloved Prince, forgive me if I am warm upon this. I wish you to feel you owe me nothing; and whatever I owe you, I wish to owe to your love and to your good opinion, but to no other principle. Tell Mr. Gunn, my own Augustus, that you love me, that you are resolved to marry me, that you have pledged your sacred word; tell him, if you please, that upon the Bible you have sworn it, that I have done the same, and nothing shall ever divide us; but

don't let him imagine that I have been vile. Do this, my only love, but pray take care of the character of your wife, of your
"AUGUSTA."

The Prince wrote back: "Do, my dearest Augusta, trust me; I will never abuse the confidence you put in me, and more and more will endeavour to deserve it. I only wait for your orders to speak to Mr. Gunn; say only that you wish me to do it, and I will hasten to get a positive answer. See, my soul, it only depends upon *you* to speak; *thy* Augustus thou wilt find at all times ready to serve *you*. He thinks, he dreams of nothing but to make thee happy. Can he not succeed in this, all his hopes are gone; life will be nothing to him; he will pass the days in one constant melancholy, wishing them soon to conclude, and finding every one longer than the other. Indeed, my Augusta, that cannot be the case; my solemn oath is given, and that can never be recalled. I am yours, my soul, ever yours."

About ten days passed over, and nothing was done. The lover, on April 4th, 1793, wrote the following frantic appeal, which no fair one thus piteously entreated could resist:

"Will you allow me to come to you this evening? It is my only hope. O, let me come, and we will send for Mr. Gunn! Everything but this is hateful to me. More than forty-eight hours have I passed without the smallest nourishment. O, let me not live so! Death is certainly better than this; which, if in forty-eight hours it has not taken place, must follow; for, by all that is holy, till when I am married, I will eat nothing; and if I am not to be married, the promise shall die with me! I am resolute. Nothing in the world shall alter my determination. If Gunn will not marry me, I will die. . . . I will be conducted in everything by you; but I must be married or die. I would rather see none of my family than be deprived of you. You alone can make me; you alone shall this evening. I will sooner drop than give you up. Good God, how I feel! and my love to be doubted sincere and warm. The Lord knows the truth of it; and, as I say, if in forty-eight hours I am not married, I am no more. O Augusta, my soul, let us try; let me come; I am capable of everything; I fear nothing; and Mr. Gunn, seeing our resolution, will agree. I am half dead. Good God, what will become of me? I shall go mad, most undoubtedly."

To which Lady Augusta sent the following reply :

"My treasure, my dearest life and love, how can I refuse you? And yet dare I trust to the happiness your letter promises me? You shall come if you wish it; you shall do as you like; my whole soul rejoices in the assurances of your love, and to your exertions I will trust. I will send to —; but I fear the badness of the night will prevent his coming. My mother has ordered her carriage at past seven, and will not, I fear, be out before the half-hour after. To be yours to-night seems a dream that I cannot make out. The whole day have I been plunged in misery, and now to awake to joy is a felicity that is beyond my ideas of bliss. I doubt its success; but do as you will; I am what you will; your will must be mine; and no will can ever be dearer to me, more mine, than that of my Augustus, my lover, my all."

The clergyman came, and, unknown to Lady Dunmore, they were married.

Only three months later, Lady Dunmore learned the truth that her son-in-law was a royal prince. They came to England towards the winter, and there the Prince heard that, apart from any bearing of the Royal Marriage Act, the fact of the marriage being in the Roman jurisdiction might invalidate it, or be used to invalidate it. He at once determined to have the ceremony repeated; and the congregation at the now fashionable church of St. George's, Hanover Square, must have heard the banns given out of two private persons unadorned with titles.

When the King heard of it, steps were taken to have the marriage set aside, and the Royal Marriage Act was introduced. The hardship and absurdity of the measure were also put forward; for the descendants of George II. might amount to over a thousand in time, according to the horseshoe progression, and "where were husbands or wives to be procured for them?" It was therefore a virtual prohibition from marriage, and "a perpetual restraint." And a ridiculous inconsistency, taken in connection with this view of the matter, was that the House had just been discussing the Thirty-nine Articles, and had affirmed them; one of which was that all Christians had a right to marry. Frequent allusions were made to the Star Chamber; and Mr. Dowdeswell made a telling point when he asked: "Why a man should not be thought fit to marry before twenty-five, when he was thought fit to reign at eighteen?"

This last point, indeed, redeemed the bill; for the limitation

up to twenty-five years of age, under which the King's consent was necessary, virtually made him guardian during a long minority. After that age, if the King still refused his consent, the Prince might give notice to the Privy Council; and if, after a year's interval, the Parliament did not object, the marriage might take place. Now, this portion the King was evidently induced to adopt from the belief that Parliament would always be as eager to indorse the royal wishes as it was then. But a royal prince may now marry whom he please, and the House of Commons would find it contrary to its temper and constitution to dream of interfering.

It is curious, therefore, that this Royal Marriage Act should be so little understood, or that a false idea of its repressive powers should be abroad. It has long been believed, for instance, that certain august personages connected with the royal family (to use the verbiage of *The Court Newsman*) have been prevented contracting or declaring their marriage, owing to the pronounced veto of a still more august personage. It will be seen that these personages, being past five-and-twenty, could have safely consulted their own inclinations.

But the real hardship of the Royal Marriage Act lay in the penalty—viz. the nullity and voidableness of the marriage. The idea of dissolving an honourable contract between those “whom God has joined” on the mere whim of a parent seems wholly unworthy of a *soi-disant* religious country. At the present day, however, it may be doubted whether the nation would tolerate the dissolution of such an unequal marriage, but still one of affection, even if the sovereign was inclined to exert the powers given by Act of Parliament.

These considerations applied with great force to the case of the Duke of Sussex. When we come to consider who was Lady Augusta Murray, the old King might have had more reverence for one of more illustrious pedigree than he could boast. Through her mother, who was a Stewart, she could trace back in the straightest line to the Hamiltons, Dukes of Chatelherault, and, with a step beyond, to James II., King of Scotland. On her father's side, she could trace back through the Stanleys to the daughter of Henry VII. of England. Farther, through the Stanleys a descent was established from William I., Prince of Orange, and Louis, Duke of Montpensier. And finally, through the same line, from Charles VII. of France. With such a pedigree the young Scotch lady might have challenged comparison with many princess in Europe.

The Court of Arches, by a formal process, declared both the marriage in England and that at Rome null and void. It was

confidently asserted at the time that the Prince wrote a letter to his father, begging permission to relinquish his contingent rights in the succession, and to sink into the character of a private gentleman, rather than be separated from his beloved Augusta. This could not be granted; but, in 1806, the King's licence was given to the lady, to assume the name of d'Ameland, which was in some degree a recognition of her affinity to the royal family, and, though illegitimate by the law of England, the son was to succeed, in failure of male issue of the King and the Duke of Cumberland, to the crown of Hanover.

The marriage having been dissolved, so far as the law of the land was concerned, the Prince vehemently protested his resolution not to accept this decision; and though his health did not allow him to live much with her in England, and an "estrangement" took place later, he always manfully maintained the troth he had plighted to his wife, the Lady Augusta Murray. There were two children of the marriage—Sir Augustus d'Este and a daughter, both now dead. The former made unwearied efforts to procure some recognition of his claims, obtaining legal opinions, and petitioning; but of course with no result, the King being inflexible. The well-known Sir Thomas Wilde, afterwards Lord Truro, married the daughter of this unlucky marriage. In the year 1830, the heroine of the romance died, and the royal Prince, after a short interval, married an Irish lady—Lady Cecilia Buggin, or rather Underwood; who, after the death of her royal husband, was created Duchess of Inverness.

CHAPTER XXIV.

1793.

RETURNING now to the Prince of Wales, this question of his marriage seemed to become more pressing as his affairs became more desperate. He and his brother were pursuing their old courses with even greater recklessness. His friend, Sir J. Harris, now Lord Malmesbury, having arrived in town from the Continent, on Sunday, June 3, was called into council on the following day. To him he unburthened his wretched and hopeless state—thus graphically described by his friend :

“Saw Prince of Wales early the 4th ; he was very well pleased with what I had done at Berlin, thanked me for it, etc. ; stated his affairs to me as more distressed than ever. Several executions had been in his house—Lord Rawdon had saved him from one—that his debts amounted to three hundred and seventy thousand pounds. He said he was trying, through the Chancellor, to prevail on the King to apply to Parliament to increase his income.

“On the Wednesday following I was with him again, by appointment. He repeated the same again, said that if the King would raise his revenue to a hundred thousand pounds a year, he would appropriate thirty-five thousand of it to pay the interest of his debts, and establish a sinking fund. That if this could not be done, he must break up his establishment, reduce his income to ten thousand pounds a year, and go abroad. He made a merit of having given up the turf, and blamed the Duke of York for remaining on it. He said (which I well knew before) that his racing-stable cost him upwards of thirty thousand pounds yearly. He was very anxious, and, as is usual on these occasions,

nervous and agitated. He said (on my asking him the question) that he did not stand so well with the King as he did some months ago, but that he was better than ever with the Queen—that she had advised him to press the King, through the Chancellor, to propose to Mr. Pitt to bring an increase of the Prince's income before Parliament, and that if this was done, she would use her influence to promote it.

"I strongly recommended his pressing the Queen. He suggested the idea of going to Mr. Pitt directly through the Chancellor, etc. I doubted both the consent of the Chancellor to such a step at the moment he was going out, and his influence and weight if he did consent to it. I took the liberty of disapproving his going abroad on any terms. . . . I saw the Duke of York on the 4th of June, and the Duchess at their own house. He mentioned with concern and uneasiness the division in the party. He considered it as a breaking-up of its strength, and he was apprehensive of the consequences to the country at large. He condemned Fox, and reprobated in the strongest terms the conduct of Grey, Lambton, and the Reformers. He said the King of Prussia had for a long time not written either to him or to the Duchess, or even answered their letters, without his being able to assign a cause. He said he stood very well at St. James's.

"I saw the Prince again on the 7th June, at Carlton House, as before. He repeated the same things, and added that, if he could not obtain some assurance from the King that he would apply to Parliament in the next Session of Parliament, before this ended, that he should be ruined, and must go abroad. I combated again this idea; but he appeared to have a wish and some whim about going abroad I could not discover. He talked coldly and unaffectionately about the Duke and Duchess of York, and very slightly of the Duke of Clarence. He asked me whether I approved his having spoken on the Proclamation—that is, in favour of Government—in the manner he had, and held very right language on the subject. I told him I was sorry his lawyers, Erskine and Pigot, went a different way from him; that this was unbecoming. He said he once had thought of dismissing them, but that, on considering it, he was inclined to believe that such a marked measure would only give them consequence, and do more harm than good, by bringing the subject into more frequent conversation."

Colonel St. Leger came to Lord Malmesbury on the 8th June. "He said the Prince was more attached to Mrs. Fitzherbert than ever. She dislikes the Duchess of York, because the Duchess will not treat her *en belle-sœur*—it is that is the cause of the

coolness between the two brothers. He confirmed the total ruin of the Prince, and said the Duke's affairs were in a very bad way. He had returned to England with the highest reputation, and might have done what he pleased with the King, who doted on him; that he very idly has resumed several of his old habits—he plays at Brookes's, goes to Newmarket, and loses, and neglects St. James's; that he behaves vastly well to the Duchess, and is happy. Anthony St. Leger confirmed all that his brother said about Mrs. Fitzherbert. He blamed her excessively, and said she was the cause of the two brothers being ill together."

We are not, therefore, surprised to learn that the step of appealing to the King was decided upon: and Lord Southampton, who was growing accustomed to such tasks, drew up a statement which was presented to the King. His Majesty was obdurate. Again came the ostentatiously theatrical retrenchment: five hundred horses sold, servants discharged, Carlton House shut up, and trustees appointed. Lords Thurlow and Radnor undertook this office. He was to live as a Cornish country gentleman; the strictest economy was to be observed, and his modest revenue was to be limited to £11,000 a year.*

The truth was the King was triumphant and highly popular. It was now that the events on the Continent had brought about the well-known division among the Liberals; the Duke of Portland, Burke, and the purer Whigs breaking off from Mr. Fox, the more Radical wing of the party. This revolt was natural in the face of the bloody excesses which were being perpetrated by revolutionary mobs. Burke's "dagger-scene" and his quarrel with Fox were the melodramatic elements of the episode,† and it may be conceived that Reformers and Radicals were in ill odour. The Prince, who had found out that Liberal politics and an empty purse went together, and that the Tories had at least the power of granting supplies, had besides little sympathy with the extreme doctrines of Mr. Fox and his friends. And it is only fair to him to bear in mind—when we come to consider his later better-known "treatment of the Whigs," that these had set him the example of gravitating to the other side. He had signified his cordial approval of the Government "proclamation," though his friend Mr. Fox disapproved of it. We do not find him taking part in the open negotiations with

* Auckland, "Correspondence," ii. 463.

† This weapon, which when thrown on the floor of the House excited ridicule rather than terror, had been brought to Sir T. Bland Burgess, the Under Secretary, by a Birmingham maker, who had received it as a pattern for a large order. Burke borrowed it for his exhibition. Lord Eldon had another of these pattern daggers.—Twiss, "Life of Lord Eldon," i. 218.

the Whigs that followed, but here is opened a rather curious chapter of politics. In the advances that were made by the Liberals to the Government, the Duke of Leeds, in the August of the year 1792, was employed as negotiator, and with no less a person than the King himself. He tells the story in his interesting unpublished "Memoranda."* Walking on the terrace at Windsor, where the King was, he asked his Majesty for a private interview, having arranged this proceeding with Lord Malmesbury, having also, as he told his Majesty, "the concurrence" of Fox and the Duke of Portland. The King, however, was exceedingly cold as to the first-named statesman, and did not mention him more than once during the whole interview, "if even that." The Duke suggested that several interviews had taken place between Lord Loughborough and Mr. Dundas, at one of which Mr. Pitt had been present, "fair evidence (he urged) that ministers were not indisposed to an arrangement." "To my great surprise the King answered that he had not heard anything upon the subject for a long time; that Mr. Pitt had indeed some months ago mentioned something like an opening on the part of the Duke of Portland and his friends, to which his Majesty had answered, 'Anything complimentary to them, but no power!'" "This brief, but copious answer," adds the Duke of Leeds, "explains the offer of the Garter to the Duke of Portland, and of a marquisate to Lord Fitzwilliam." The King then asked who was to be the First Lord of the Treasury under this combination, and was answered, "One who had the confidence of both parties." His Majesty said that was very hard on Mr. Pitt, who had been so long in office, and added significantly, that people, from eagerly wishing an object to succeed, often deceived themselves by thinking it much nearer its accomplishment than in truth it was.

A few days later the negotiator tried Mr. Pitt, whom he thought "not quite at his ease." He opened his proposals, saying that Mr. Fox and the Duke of Portland concurred in what he was offering. Mr. Pitt listened attentively to all I said, and answered "that there had been no thoughts of any alteration in the Government, that circumstances did not call for it, nor did the people wish it, and that no new arrangement, either by a change or coalition, had ever been in contemplation!" The Duke of Leeds then alluded to the interviews with Mr. Dundas and Lord Loughborough, suggesting that he (Mr. Pitt) had been present. Mr. Pitt said that it was true, but such meetings had not in view any changes of ministry.

This is one of the most extraordinary pieces of secret history,

* Preserved in the British Museum.

and requires the clearest explanation from any biographer of Pitt, as anyone who follows Lord Malmesbury's minute account of the negotiations—the offer by Dundas of four Cabinet places, etc.—will admit.*

If it be well established, as we find it stated in the Duke of Leeds's memoranda, that Mr. Fox had been so unpatriotic as to send his friend Adair to St. Petersburg to counteract the negotiations there, it would be difficult for any loyal person to act with him. Mr. Moore states "that on the secession of the leading Whigs in 1792 the Prince had also separated himself from Mr. Fox, and had no further intercourse with him or any of his party—except, occasionally, Mr. Sheridan—till so late, I believe, as the year 1798." Thus it will be found that on two important occasions prior to his final withdrawal from the party in 1810, the Prince seized opportunities of showing his want of sympathy with their principles. And in 1793, when Lord Loughborough accepted the chancellorship of the party to which he had been opposed, the Prince wrote a letter to the hesitating Duke of Portland, and sent a message to the Grenvilles declaring his intention of joining the Government.†

To the Duchess of Devonshire he later addressed the following letter, referring the differences between sections of the Liberals as to supporting Government, written in a sort of after-dinner excitement, and under the idea that he had made all friends. It is undated.

THE PRINCE OF WALES TO THE DUCHESS OF DEVONSHIRE.

"Carlton House, Friday Night.

"How little you know me, ever dear duchess, and how much have you misconceived the object of this day's dinner, which has succeeded beyond my most sanguine expectations! It has almost, if not entirely, annihilated every coolness that has for a short time past appeared to exist between the Duke of Norfolk and his old friends, and brought Erskine back also. Ask only the Duke of Leinster and Guilford what passed. I believe you never heard a stronger eulogium pronounced from the lips of man than I this day pronounced upon Fox, in complete refutation of all the absurd doctrines and foolish distinctions which they have grounded their late conduct upon. This was most honourably, distinctly, and zealously supported by Sheridan, by which they were completely driven to the wall, and positively

* Lord Malmesbury, "Diaries," ii. 458.

† In a letter to the Duke of York, pronounced to be "proper," and "explicit."—"Court and Cabinets," ii. 237.

pledged themselves hereafter to follow no other line of politics than that which Fox and myself would hold out to them; and this with a certain degree of contrition expressed by them at their ever having ventured to express a doubt respecting either Charles or myself. Harry Howard, who never has varied in his sentiments, was overjoyed, and said he never knew anything so well done or so well timed; and that he should to-night retire to his bed the happiest of men, as his mind was now at ease, which it had not been for some time past. In short, what fell from both Sheridan as well as myself was received with rapture by the company; and I consider this as one of the luckiest and most useful days I have spent. As to particulars I must ask your patience till to-morrow, when I will relate every incident, with which I am confident you will be most completely satisfied. Pray, my ever dear duchess, whenever you bestow a thought upon me, have rather a better opinion of my steadiness and firmness. I really think, without being very romantic, I may claim this of you; at the same time I am most grateful to you for your candour, and the affectionate warmth, if I may be allowed so to call it, which dictates the contents of your letter: you may depend upon its being seen by no one but myself. Depend upon my coming to you to-morrow. I am delighted with your goodness to me, and ever,

"Most devotedly yours,

"G. P."

The Duke of York's departure for the disastrous expedition to the Netherlands furnishes us with a sketch of the heir-apparent as he appears about this time:

"The King was on the parade with the Prince of Wales, the Dukes of York, Clarence, Gloucester, and Prince William of Gloucester; the King, I think, in the character of an equestrian statue on a fierce white charger, a sufficient giggg, but looking so pleased that one liked to see him. The Grenadiers, when they began their march, sang 'God save the King!' of their own accord as they passed by him, which overcame him a good deal. The Prince of Wales was in his new Light Horse uniform, which is very handsome and theatrical, and, I daresay, delighted him; but it displayed an amount of bulk which entertained Mundy and me, and probably all beholders. The Duke of York is gone with them to Holland. I hear the Duchess is much affected, as she really likes him."*

But there was something more in this display than a mere taste for uniforms, for after the first disaster, when a relief of ten

* "Court and Cabinets," ii. 119.

thousand men was being sent out to the Duke, and Lord Moira, late Lord Rawdon, was given the command, the Prince eagerly pressed that he might be allowed to go with his friend and serve under him. This was, of course, refused; but he was presently to be engrossed with a more important affair—the question of his own marriage. Almost every step in his long life, rashly and improvidently taken, seemed destined to lead to a train of inconveniences and misfortune, and not one was more fruitful in this direction than this.

CHAPTER XXV.

1794.

MANY causes, and above all, his overwhelming money difficulties, were now forcing him into a sort of *cul-de-sac*, whence there seemed no method of extrication, save one. Any change would be welcome, and various minor causes seemed to favour the King's wishes in this regard. The first step in the transaction was a letter in which the King communicated to his minister that the Prince had, of himself, offered to make the sacrifice. He wrote from Weymouth, on August 24th, 1794: "Agreeable to what I mentioned to Mr. Pitt before I came here, I have this morning seen the Prince of Wales, who has acquainted me with his having broken off all connection with Mrs. Fitzherbert, and his desire of entering into a more creditable line of life by marrying; expressing at the same time that his wish is that my niece, the Princess of Brunswick, may be the person. Undoubtedly she is the person who naturally must be most agreeable to me. I expressed my approbation of the idea, provided his plan was to lead a life that would make him appear respectable, and consequently render the Princess happy. He assured me that he perfectly coincided with me in opinion. I then said that till Parliament assembled no arrangement could be taken, except my sounding my sister, that no idea of any other marriage may be encouraged.

"G. R."*

In spite of these protestations, it was notorious that at this time he had come under the influence of a lady about the Court, Lady Jersey. She was known as the "beautiful Miss Twysden,"

* Lord Stanhope, "Life of Pitt," ii. 20 (Appendix).

and the daughter of an Irish dignitary, the Lord Bishop of Raphoe. She was of mature age, like another lady of quality whom our Prince admired later. It was stated also that she had been a friend of Mrs. Fitzherbert's, and for a time, as will be seen, was destined to have a truly *funeste* control over the Prince.

The mode in which this change of feeling was signified to the unhappy lady with whom he had gone through the form of marriage, was characteristic. He had written to her from Brighton in his usual affectionate strain, and spoke of a dinner engagement at the Duke of Clarence's for the following day, where they were to meet. At the dinner a note was put into her hand, which gave her the first intimation that she had lost her ascendancy. Speaking of the matter to Lord Stourton, she seemed to attribute this step to Lady Jersey, who was then also at Brighton. In consequence, Mrs. Fitzherbert did not go to Brighton as usual, and also gave up her house; while Lord Jersey was appointed Master of the Horse to the Prince.

It has been often stated that it was upon a favourable report of the Duke of York, who had been sent to Brunswick, that the Princess had been selected. At the time of the arrangement he was in Holland, with his army; but he had already seen the Princess, and his report was most unfavourable. He augured ill of the match, and seems to have incurred the bitter enmity of the family. There was, besides, no good feeling between the Duchess of York and the members of the Brunswick family. The Princess Caroline, indeed, told Lord Malmesbury that she believed she had impressed the Duke of Clarence favourably.

Some five-and-twenty years later Lord Liverpool assured Lord Holland that he had been told by George III. how one day his son came to him, on his return from hunting, and said abruptly that "he wished to marry." In reply, the King said he would send off a confidential agent to report on the merits of the various Protestant Princesses. The Prince declared that this had been done. The King then recommended that the most careful inquiries should be made as to her person and manners, and his son declared this also had been done. Lord Holland adds confirmation of the report that the later Queen of Prussia had been named, who was infinitely the superior of the Brunswick Princess in youth, beauty, and every merit. Perhaps these were found objections by those who guided him, and who wished a public and legal marriage, to secure the downfall of Mrs. Fitzherbert. All well-informed persons report that the choice was directed by Lady Jersey and Lady Harcourt. The faction always gave out that he had been promised the sum of

£100,000 a year, with payment of his debts, though the ministers later violated their engagement. It was for the gain of the German people, no less than for her own, that the beautiful and interesting Princess of Mecklenburg had not been selected; nor is it quite so certain that after all it would have benefited the Prince of Wales.

Lady Charlotte Campbell records some curious gossip of the notorious Mrs. Clarke, who had been told by the Duke of York "that it had been at one time proposed that he should marry her (the Princess Caroline), and for that purpose he had been previously to see how the land lay at the Court of Brunswick; the result of which was that he did not like the Princess." A writer in "*The Quarterly Review*" (vol. lxxv. p. 421) states that he heard the same reason given for the dislike of the Brunswick family to the Duke. It occurred to Lord Malmesbury at Brunswick that it was the Duke of Clarence who had first suggested her. The King, however, told Mr. Pitt "that she was the person who must naturally be the most agreeable to him. She was, moreover, his niece."* Lord Malmesbury was abroad at this time, and was promptly directed to repair to Brunswick and make a formal proposal for the hand of the Princess.

* "*Diaries*," iii. 179.

CHAPTER XXVI.

1794—1795.

ON a Thursday at the end of November, 1794, the little Court was excited by the news that an envoy had arrived to arrange a marriage treaty between the Prince of Wales and Princess Caroline, according to the elaborate formularies then in favour. The Englishman was one of the most *spirituel* and versatile of diplomatists, even his remarkable appearance—his abundant hair and brilliant eyes—exciting attention. This, however, was not the main object of his mission, which was to persuade the vacillating Duke to take the command of the forces in Holland. He was received with great honours, and installed in the palace with servants, carriages, and guards at his disposal. Almost at once he was presented to the Princess, who was embarrassed. He, too, must have had misgivings at the meeting, for the future bride appeared to be a rather ungraceful, hard-featured young woman, redeemed, however, by a certain air of coarse good-humour. Her eyes, however, were expressive, “her bust good,” and her shoulders what the French call “impertinent.”* This absence of feminine refinement struck other English observers.† She could not conceal her delight at the brilliant prospect before her.

Then commenced the regular formal festivities of a petty German Court—great dinners, “ombre with the Duchess and her *grand maître*,” whist with the Landgravine, a masquerade at the Opera House—during all which time the diplomatist was narrowly

* For the account of this mission, see Lord Malmesbury’s “Diaries,” iii. 151.

† Huish, “Memoirs of Caroline,” i. 13.

observing all that was going on, and studying the character of the young lady. On December the 3rd, his credentials having arrived from England, the state carriages came to take him to Court to make formal demand of the Princess's hand. All parties were nervous, the Duchess quite overcome, the Princess much affected, but making her answers distinctly and firmly. This ceremony was celebrated by Court and general congratulations, presentations of gold snuff-boxes, immense dinners, and the inevitable whist. From this moment she was greeted as Princess of Wales. On the following day the contract was signed, and a very unhappy chapter in English history had commenced.

By this time the shrewd envoy had learned enough of the Princess herself to see that she was unsuited to the destined position and to the person who was to be her husband. Nearly all the petty German Courts were then distinguished by a sort of Philistinism, both in morals and manners; the young Princesses being brought up in a kind of natural religion, whose principles were sufficiently convenient and flexible to allow them to adopt the creed of any husband that might be selected for them. There were little conventional restraints for married life. He must indeed have learned many strange stories of the youthful days of the Princess which he was too discreet to report, and which, indeed, as he said in answer to the reproaches of the Prince, it did not fall within his mission to report.

She was now nearly twenty-seven years old; but the sneer of one of the Court ladies, Madame Waggenheim—who said to Lord Malmesbury at the opera, “that, old as she was, her education was not yet completed”—seemed to be founded on truth.* Beyond an acquaintance with the harpsichord, she could not be called accomplished; a friend of Mr. Addington's, M. Le Mesurier, who dined in her company, noted that she never spoke and was visibly kept under restraint. And the Duchess of Wurtemberg, writing to Lady Elgin, gives a strange picture of the domestic tyranny under which she was brought up—bullied by her mother and governesses.† As to morality and religion, the scandal of her father's behaviour must have been of fatal import. Her mother had little or no influence with her child, who had small respect for her, and “was inattentive to her when she dared.” It was scarcely surprising, therefore, that various escapades should have been reported of her girlish days. One of these stories was long after told to Mrs. Charles Kemble by one

* She both wrote and spelled badly, as her father owned to Lord Malmesbury.

† Lady Rose Weigall, “Princess Charlotte,” p. 4.

who had been an officer in the Duke's body-guard. She was at that time about sixteen, and her parents had refused to allow her to attend a ball. During the night they were summoned back to the palace by the news of her being alarmingly ill, the whole Court following, and the officer with the rest. While waiting in the ante-chamber he heard her screams; and on her parents coming to her bedside she informed them that the time was past for concealment, that she was being *accouchée*, and begged that a proper doctor might be sent for. This astounding declaration was heard by the whole Court. When the doctor came she jumped up, owned that the whole was a trick, and asked: "Would they again attempt to prevent her going to a ball?"* Making due allowance for exaggeration, this trait is quite in keeping with the admitted recklessness of her later career. It was also found necessary to keep a strict watch on her acts to prevent her making advances to persons of low degree. As was to be expected, some arrangements for marriage with a German prince had been contemplated; but these had failed, owing to the uncertainty of temper of the Princess; and she was now, as we have shown, not far from her thirtieth year, when this unlooked-for and advantageous alliance offered.

The Duchess, her mother, was, on the whole, a good-natured, coarse woman, of sense and of agreeable manners. The mother of Archbishop Trench, one of the most engaging and interesting women of her day, who was at the Brunswick Court about five years before, was delighted with her "ease, good humour and familiarity, and winning condescension." She was struck, too, with the simple, almost homely, fashions of the royal circle—ladies sitting round, working, knitting stockings.† Such was the bride of the Prince of Wales and her family!

Meantime the versatile diplomatist was busy making himself acquainted with the character of the young Princess. But from all sides he was receiving ominous warnings; and the whole Court, it is clear, were nervous as to what her behaviour would be in her new situation. All impressed on him that she was to be "kept strictly" and with a tight rein, and the envoy was almost implored to advise her to be cautious, and avoid her besetting sin of being too familiar with everyone and of "saying everything that came into her head." "She was not *bête*," said her father to him, "but she had no judgment." Again and again he came back to the subject: "She could not go alone," he said, "she must be guided and directed." He excused her

* "Diaries of a Lady of Quality," p. 186.

† "Remains of Mrs. Trench."

on the score of the free style of speech of her mother in every company, which was a bad example. Less profitable, however, was his own. Strangers remarked that his manner to the Duchess was very cold, and that hers was embarrassed, and soon discovered that one Mdle. Hertzfeldt, a lady of rank, was installed at the palace as mistress *en titre*, and had actually had her recognised place at all the Court festivities. What could be hoped of a daughter in presence of such a scandal? The lady now alluded to who engaged the Duke's favour was also one of those who gave useful advice to the envoy, who courted her assiduously. It was absolutely necessary, she said to him confidentially, that the Princess should be watched and kept in retirement. "She is not corrupted; she had never done anything really bad, but she had no command of her words; she confides in everyone, and when she is surrounded in London with clever intriguers, everything she says will be reported and distorted." This lady was certainly sagacious, and her words were strongly prophetic. She also hinted at the indiscreetness of the Duchess, who made no secret of her dislike to Queen Charlotte and other members of the royal family. These prejudices her daughter would take with her to England.* This dislike extended to the Duke and Duchess of York.

Thus encouraged and assured that his advice would be of the greatest assistance, Lord Malmesbury proceeded to lecture, as it might be called, the Princess seriously. His efforts were received favourably. Sitting next her at supper, he would advise her to avoid familiarity, to have no confidants, to avoid giving any opinion, and above all be very attentive to the Queen. To his surprise she asked him about the Prince's attachments; nor was she disturbed at learning that one of his "favourites" was to be placed about her, as lady-in-waiting. "She says it is wished here that her brother William should marry the Princess Sophia of Gloucester; I advise her not to meddle in it. She talks about the Duke of Clarence, whom she prefers to the Duke of York; and it struck me to-day for the first time that he originally put her into the Prince's head, and that with a view to plague the Duke and Duchess of York, whom he hates, and whom the Prince no longer likes; well knowing that the Princess Caroline and Duchess of York dislike each other, and that this match would be

* This, it is plain, was one of the discordant elements in this unfortunate marriage. There was a rooted dislike between the female members of the two families. The Duchess complained to Lord Malmesbury that the Queen grudged her some jewels, and had asked back a diamond ring, the King's present.

particularly unpleasant to her and the Duke. I praise the Duke of York to her, and speak with great applause of the behaviour of the Duchess, who by her discretion and conduct has conciliated to herself the goodwill of the whole nation. I did this to pique her, and to make her anxious to do the same. She has no fond, no fixed character, a light and flighty mind, but meaning well and well-disposed; and my eternal theme to her is, to think before she speaks, to recollect herself. She says she wishes to be loved by the people; this, I assure her, can only be obtained by making herself respected and rare—that the sentiment of being loved by the people is a mistaken one.”

In a letter written to a German lady in England, dated the 28th of November, she wrote :

“You are aware, my friend, of my destiny. I am about entering into a matrimonial alliance with my first-cousin, George, Prince of Wales. His generosity I regard, and his letters bespeak a mind well cultivated and refined. My uncle is a good man, and I love him very much, but I feel that I shall never be inexpressibly happy. Estranged from my connections, my associations, my friends, all that I hold dear and valuable, I am about entering on a permanent connection. I fear for the consequences. Yet I esteem and respect my intended husband, and I hope for great kindness and attention. But, ah me! I say sometimes, I cannot now love him with ardor. I am indifferent to my marriage, but not averse to it; I think I shall be happy, but I fear my joy will not be enthusiastic. The man of my choice I am debarred from possessing, and I resign myself to my destiny. I am attentively studying the English language; I am acquainted with it, but I wish to speak it with fluency. I shall strive to render my husband happy, and to interest him in my favour, since the Fates will have it that I am to be Princess of Wales.”

Meanwhile expresses were passing between London and the little Court, and all the arrangements were nearly completed. Before Lord Malmesbury had been at Brunswick a week, a messenger had arrived from the Prince of Wales with a letter pressing him “vehemently” to set out with the Princess at once. The messenger was also bearer of the Prince’s portrait, in which he was highly flattered and represented as arrayed in becoming regimentals. Up to this moment the Princess had an idea of him only from description.

Thus wrote the eager suitor :

THE PRINCE OF WALES TO LORD MALMESBURY.

"Carlton House, 23rd November, 1794.

"MY DEAR LORD,

"I have sent Major Hislop back again to Brunswick, which I judged to be an advisable measure on many accounts, as more particularly, I think, he may prove, from his knowledge of the country, a very useful *avant-courier* to you and your fair charge in your journey to the water's side. I have charged him with letters for the Duke, Duchess, and Princess, which I will beg of you to present to their different destinations, with every proper expressions on my part, and to which no one can give so agreeable a *tournure* as yourself. I have likewise desired Major Hislop to give you an ample and thorough account of the steps I have taken towards the expediting everything on this side of the water, as well as with my brother the Duke of York, to whom I have written also by Hislop; and as to what is now necessary to forward the completing everything at Brunswick, I must leave that to you, hoping that you will make every exertion possible to put the Princess in possession of her own home as near the 20th of the ensuing month as possible, for everything that can create delay at the present moment is bad on every account, but particularly so to the public, whose expectations have now been raised for some months, and would be quite outrageous, were it possible for them to perceive any impediment arising to what they have had their attention drawn to for so long a time, besides the suspense, and the naturally unpleasant feelings attendant upon suspense, which I myself must be subject to, and the very honourable, fair, and handsome manner in which the Duke and Duchess have both conducted themselves to me in this transaction; their having also in their last letters, both to the King and me, said that the Princess was ready to set off instantly; in short, all these reasons make it necessary for me, my dear Lord, to desire you to press your departure from Brunswick at as short a date as possible from the receipt of this letter. I have written fully to the Duchess upon the subject, and I doubt not but she will acquaint you with the contents of her letters, as I desire that you will have the goodness to do so by her, by showing her, or acquainting her nearly of the purport of this letter.

"I should think the travelling through Holland still practicable and safe, and if so, certainly preferable on every account; but, if not, we then must have recourse to the Elbe, which is certainly a very disagreeable alternative; however, whichever way the Princess is to come, I am clear it should be determined upon

instantly by you. I wish most certainly, if possible, that she should pass through Holland, if it is still upon the cards, therefore desire you to determine if you can upon that. We cannot tell on this side the water as well as you can, or rather as Hislop can, after his communication with the Duke of York; and you will then be able, when you have seen the Major, and know what has passed between him and the Duke, to fix your plan immediately, and so immediately put it into execution. According to our calculation, Hislop ought to be at Brunswick the 8th; I therefore trust that by the 16th I shall from you, my dear Lord, receive an account of your having fixed the day of your departure, and not only of the probability, but indeed of the certainty of your being many miles on your journey. There are some other particular circumstances which might not be so proper or so safe to commit to paper, which I have entrusted Major Hislop with, and which he will communicate by word of mouth to you. I will not detain you, my dear Lord, any longer, except to assure you how happy I was in having this opportunity of testifying the very sincere regard I entertain for you, as well as those sentiments with which I remain, etc.

“GEORGE P.”

This singular communication was characteristic of the writer's loose train of thought, and belonged to those illusions which he indulged in. Neither he nor Lord Malmesbury had anything to do with the arrangements for bringing over the Princess. These were all controlled by the King, and depended on the safety of the route, the position of the protecting force, and other matters, which required the gravest consideration. Lord Malmesbury was much embarrassed by this pressure, as he was “tied down by the most precise instructions.” He wrote to the minister—the Duke of Portland—a complaint of this treatment, explaining that he was there “under the King's command, and could only act by his special order.”

The Prince had also added some private instructions which he did not venture to commit to paper, and which were no doubt beyond his province. All this the envoy quietly put aside in his reply to him, with assurance that “not an hour should be lost” as soon as he learned what place had been fixed on for embarking at. It will be said indulgently that it was but the ardour of the bridegroom eager to see his bride. This feeling, however, could have amounted to little more than curiosity. It might be that he was thinking of the price which was to be paid on completion of his contract; and, as it turned out, the subject of his debts was brought before the House a fortnight after the marriage.

This is, indeed, further proved by his ungraciously refusing to allow a lady, whom the Princess had selected as a sort of confidential reader, to be brought over.

At last, on Monday, December 29th, the party started; amid firing of cannon and the shouts of the crowd. "She must be ruled by fear—even by terror," were almost the last encouraging words addressed to the envoy. Her mother was to go with her as far as the sea. The Duke was much affected at parting, and begged the English nobleman to watch over her. With such awkward forebodings the luckless Princess commenced her journey to the land to which she was to bring so much confusion and scandal. The whole of this preliminary leaves a most unpleasant impression, and it is impossible to have followed the conversations, so carefully reported, without seeing that all the later events followed in the most natural order, and almost as of course.

The fleet had been ordered to the Texel, and it was proposed that the party should journey through Holland. On the road, however, it was heard that the French had made such progress that it was impossible to think of reaching the coast. The party therefore, after staying at Osnabruck—the seat of the Duke of York's bishopric—determined to wait events at Hanover. These obstacles caused a long and tedious delay; and, as it proved, they were three months on the road.

The effect of this comparative emancipation on the character of the Princess was seen almost at once. Her mentor was every day more and more surprised by some new and disagreeable revelation; though it must be owned his tone to her was too much of the schoolmaster. But there were other matters which shocked him inexpressibly. It would have been worth while seeing his face, when a page brought down her highness's tooth, which had just been drawn, for him to look at; "nasty and indelicate," he writes, with disgust.

Lord Malmesbury's notes and observations on the journey are significant enough. We shall let him speak for himself.

"*January 2nd.*—I persuade the Princess Caroline to be munificent towards some poor *émigrés* dying of hunger, and through want—she disposed to be, but not knowing how to set about it. I tell her, liberality and generosity is an enjoyment, not a severe virtue. She gives a louis for some lottery tickets; I give ten, and say the Princess ordered me. She surprised; I said I was sure she did not mean to give for the ticket its precise value, and that I forestalled her intention. Next day a French *émigré*, with a pretty child, draws near the table; the Princess Caroline immediately, of her own accord, puts ten louis in a paper

and gives it to the child; the Duchess observes it, and inquires of me—I was dining between them—what it was. I tell her a demand on her purse. She, embarrassed, ‘*Je n’ai que mes beaux doubles louis de Brunswick.*’ I answer, ‘*Qu’ils deviendront plus beaux entre les mains de cet enfant que dans ta poche.*’ She ashamed, and gives three of them. In the evening, Princess Caroline, to whom these sort of virtues were never preached, on my praising the coin of the money at Brunswick, offers me very seriously eight or ten double louis, saying, ‘*Cela ne me fait rien—je ne m’en soucie pas—je vous prie de la prendre.*’ I mention these facts to show her character; it could not distinguish between giving as a benevolence, and flinging away the money like a child.

“*January 4th.*—Princess Caroline very *gauche* at cards—speaks without thinking—gets too easy—calls the ladies (she never saw) ‘*Mon cœur, ma chère, ma petite.*’ I notice this, and reprove it strongly. The Princess, for the first time, disposed to take it amiss; I do not pretend to observe it. Duchess wants to return to Brunswick, and leave us to go on by ourselves; this I oppose, and suppose it is impossible. ‘If I am taken,’ says she, ‘I am sure the King will be angry.’ ‘He will be very sorry,’ I reply; ‘but your Royal Highness must not leave your daughter till she is in the hands of her attendants.’ She argues, but I will not give way, and she does.

“*January 18th.*—Princess Caroline very missish at supper. I much fear these habits are irrecoverably rooted in her—she is naturally curious, and a gossip—she is quick and observing, and she has a silly pride of finding out everything; she thinks herself particularly acute in discovering likings, and this leads her at times to the most improper remarks and conversation. I am determined to take an opportunity of correcting, *coûte qu’il coûte.*

“*January 10th, 1795.*—On summing up Princess Caroline’s character to-day, it came out to my mind to be, that she has quick parts, without a sound or distinguishing understanding; that she has a ready conception, but no judgment; caught by the first impression, led by the first impulse; turned away by appearances or *enjouement*; loving to talk, and prone to confide and make missish friendships that last twenty-four hours. Some natural, but no acquired morality, and no strong innate notions of its value and necessity; warm feelings, and nothing to counterbalance them; great good humour, and much good nature; no appearance of caprice; rather quick and *vive*, but not a grain of rancour. From her habits, from the life she was allowed and even compelled to live, forced to dissemble;

fond of gossiping, and this strengthened greatly by the example of her good mother, who is all curiosity and inquisitiveness, and who has no notion of not gratifying this desire at any price. In short, the Princess, in the hands of a steady and sensible man, would probably turn out well; but where it is likely she will find faults perfectly analogous to her own she will fail. She has no governing powers, although her mind is physically strong. She has her father's courage, but it is to her, as to him, of no avail. He wants mental decision, she character and tact.

"*February 18th.*—Argument with the Princess about her toilette. She piques herself on dressing quick; I disapprove this. She maintains her point; I, however, desire Madame Busche to explain to her that the Prince is very delicate, and that he expects a long and very careful *toilette de propreté*, of which she has no idea. On the contrary, she neglects it sadly, and is offensive from this neglect. Madame Busche executes her commission well, and the Princess comes out the next day well washed all over.

"*March 6th.*—I had conversations with the Princess Caroline on the toilette, on cleanliness, and on delicacy of speaking. On these points I endeavoured, as far as was possible for a man, to inculcate the necessity of great and nice attention to every part of dress, as well as to what was hid as to what was seen. (I knew she wore coarse petticoats, coarse shifts, and thread stockings, and these never well washed, or changed often enough.) I observed that a long toilette was necessary, and gave her no credit for boasting that hers was a short one. What I could not say myself on this point, I got said through women—through Madame Busche, and afterwards through Mrs. Harcourt. It is remarkable how, on this point, her education has been neglected, and how much her mother, although an Englishwoman, was inattentive to it."

THE PRINCE OF WALES TO LORD MALMESBURY.

"Carlton House, 21st Feb. 1795.

"MY DEAR LORD,

"I do myself the pleasure of acknowledging the receipt of three letters I received on the 19th from your Lordship—two dated the 15th and 18th January, the other I suppose written on a subsequent day, but bearing no date. Accept my best thanks for every step that you have taken, as, to the best of my judgment, nothing can have been more consistent in point of prudence and propriety, and, indeed, more consonant to my wishes than your conduct appears to me to have been throughout

this very tedious and trying embassy. The accounts you are so good as to give me of the temper and resignation with which the Princess is so good as to bear with the interruptions in her journey, is more than I fancy anyone would venture to say for me from hence, as I assure you, all the mismanagement, procrastinations, and difficulties that I have met with in the conduct of this business on this side of the water have totally put patience (a virtue you well know that our family in general are not much endowed with) out of the question. On account of the unfortunate position of affairs on the Continent, I have judged it necessary, in order to bring the Princess over in the most expeditious, as well as the safest mode, to contrive she should be in a manner smuggled over into this country; this meets entirely with His Majesty's approbation, and the plan to be pursued is this. The yachts, as well as the ladies and gentlemen who were to have had the honour of attending the Princess, to remain under expectation of receiving sailing orders hourly. The convoy destined originally to attend upon the Princess, to proceed to sea with the rest of the fleet and transports going to fetch the remains of our army from the Continent. By which means they will endeavour to make Stade, having detached themselves from the rest of the fleet at a certain latitude. Finding themselves there, to take you and your charge aboard, before it is suspected even on this side of the water that such a plan is in agitation. Not thinking it proper that the Princess should come without a lady, Mrs. Harcourt is ordered to attend her; and her own ladies, Lady Jersey and Mrs. Aston, who were to have sailed in the yachts to have fetched her over, will be ready to receive her at the water-side on her landing, together with Clermont and the rest of her suite. The general and universal mortification occasioned by the fleet's being obliged to put back, made us doubly anxious by every means that human foresight can devise to prevent a similar unpleasant *contretemps* happening again; and we therefore think, in addition to this motive, that by retaining the yachts and attendants here, we shall prevent entirely our enemies from having the smallest intimation of our having in present and immediate contemplation the scheme of the Princess's crossing.

I hope you will make this plan acceptable to the Princess as well as the Duchess, as you must be well acquainted with my impatience; and I beg you will assure them both that there is no sort of respect, state, and attention, that shall not be shown the Princess, the moment she sets her foot on our dear little island. I am convinced you will heartily concur with me in my anxious endeavours through this, or even any other means, to

bring your voyage to as expeditious and happy a termination as possible. I write to the Duchess of Brunswick by the same courier, which letters you will have the goodness to deliver into her hands yourself. I cannot help once more reiterating my thanks to you, my dear Lord, for your judgment and caution through all these late occurrences, etc.

"I remain with great truth, etc.,

"GEORGE P.

"P.S.—Pray say everything that is kind from me to Hislop."

At last news arrives of the fleet being off Stade. The Duchess parted from her daughter in much affliction, and then started for home. At this stage their guide arrives at the conclusion that "the Princess's heart is very, very light."

One of the ladies selected to attend her, Mrs. Harcourt, had met the Princess at Hanover; the other, Lady Jersey, was to meet her on landing in England. The first had driven into the town attended by two horsemen. The other lady, presuming on her influence, had come down to Rochester, and tried to force herself on board the yacht, scandalising that not too sensitive "Jack Payne," who was in command. For his proper refusal Mr. Payne fell into disgrace with his royal master, and did not recover his favour for several years.* A crowd of English of distinction, with some of the *émigrés*, were eager to secure a passage home. On Saturday, at seven o'clock, the Princess embarked on board the *Jupiter*, fifty-gun ship, and by Wednesday the squadron was off Yarmouth. A thick fog here set in, and it was not until noon on Saturday that they dropped anchor off Gravesend. The Princess won the hearts of the officers by her unflagging good-humour, and even extorted praise from her mentor. On Sunday morning the royal party was transferred to one of the royal yachts, and after a pleasant sail, reached Greenwich at twelve o'clock, where vast crowds were assembled to greet her. There was a delay of more than an hour at the governor's, owing to the royal carriages not having arrived from London; and it turned out that this was owing to her lady-in-waiting not being ready. When she did arrive, she conducted herself with a strange arrogance, found fault with the Princess's dress in such terms that Lord Malmesbury had to speak rather sharply to her. The poor stranger, who was becomingly dressed in a muslin gown and blue satin petticoat, with a black beaver hat and blue and black feathers, was required to doff her attire in a room of the governor's house, and put on a white satin gown and an elegant turban cap, which Lady Jersey had brought from town.

* "Life of Sir G. Elliot," iii. 47.

The procession, consisting of two coaches and six, and escorted by a detachment of the Prince's own regiment, Cornet Brummell being one of the officers, then started for London, and was attended with but moderate greeting and applause. The poor friendless creature was virtually alone, being refused anyone of her own countryfolk, who might have advised and guided her.

About half-past two they reached St. James's Palace, the rooms of the Duke of Cumberland in Cleveland Row being given up to her. Then the windows were opened and the Princess showed herself to the crowd. Lord Malmesbury at once went for the Prince—a dramatic crisis indeed. The next few minutes were to reveal what was to be the issue of this fatal experiment. The Prince came immediately, and it was noticed by the crowd outside that he was agitated. "I, accordingly," says Lord Malmesbury, "to the established etiquette, introduced (no one else being in the room) the Princess Caroline to him. She, very properly, in consequence of my saying it was the right mode of proceeding, attempted to kneel to him. He raised her gracefully enough, and embraced her, said barely one word, turned round, retired to a distant part of the apartment, and, calling to me, said: 'Harris, I am not well: pray get me a glass of brandy.' I said: 'Sir, had you not better have a glass of water?' Upon which he, much out of humour, said, *with an oath*: 'No; I will go directly to the Queen.' And away he went."

No wonder after this strange reception the Princess, bewildered and confused, should have exclaimed: "Mon Dieu! is he always like that?" Then added: "I find him *very fat*, and not at all like the picture sent me." Lord Malmesbury tried to mend matters as best he could, after a lame fashion—"His royal highness was a good deal affected and flurried at this first meeting." The Princess, not likely to be imposed on by such an excuse, proceeded to make other uncomplimentary remarks, embarrassing her companion a good deal, when he was hastily summoned away to wait on the King. This propitious introduction to her new life is significant of the future treatment she was to experience.

The Prince went straight to the Queen and the King, strangely enough began to talk on foreign politics with Lord Malmesbury, carelessly putting a single question as to what another father would have considered a most interesting subject. "Is she good-humoured?" he asked. The other answered that he had never seen her otherwise, even when severely tried. "I am glad of it," said the King, significantly. Thus already there was a hostile party formed against her, and on the very night of her arrival she must have learned that her husband already almost

disliked her, that her cousins the Duke and Duchess of York were hostile, that her lady of honour was her enemy, and placed near her to be a spy, that the other attendant was unacceptable to her, while her new parents were indifferent.

There was a small dinner that evening, consisting only of the travelling party and the Prince, and at which the Vice-Chamberlain did the honours. Here the behaviour of the Princess was most unfortunate, "flippant, rattling, affecting wit;" and the guests were amazed to hear her throwing out raileries on the Prince's well-known *penchant*. The Prince showed by his looks how disgusted he was. "This, unfortunately," says Lord Malmesbury, "fixed his dislike, which, when left to himself, the Princess had not the talent to remove, but, by still observing the same giddy manners and coarse sarcasm, increased till it became positive hatred." This was deplorable enough, and there must have been more of recklessness than of want of feeling; and she explains it piteously in her own account: "The first moment I saw my *futur* and Lady Jersey together I knew how it all was, and I said to myself, 'Oh, very well!' I took my *partie*. . . . One of the civil things his royal highness did just at first was to find fault with my shoes, and, as I was very young and lively in those days, I told him to make me a better pair and bring them to me. I brought letters from all the princes and princesses to him from all the petty courts, and I tossed them to him, and said, 'There! that's to prove I'm not an impostor!'"* The envoy, with all his diplomacy, could not see what is here revealed, that this lightness of behaviour was the assumed indifference of a woman hurt in her pride—"Oh, very well! I took my *partie*."

In the same spirit the Princess now actually made a confidante of her lady-in-waiting, and is said to have calmly confided to her that she had been attached to another person. This, it was presumed, was reported to the Prince, who on the next day showed a marked coldness. Another speech was also reported. Hair-powder was then going out of fashion, but the Prince still adhered to his custom, and the Princess declared to the same confidante, "that he looked like a sergeant-major with his ears powdered." Such personal remarks—his upon her shoes, hers upon his wig—were not likely to produce agreeable feelings.

After this dinner was over, arrived the King and Queen and other members of the royal family to welcome the Princess, who was presented in due form. The King was cordial and even affectionate, but the Queen's coldness was remarked.† Then she was left in

* "Memoirs of Lady C. Bury," i. 17.

† Huish, "Memoirs of George IV."

the old Palace, in charge of Mrs. Aston, and thus the exciting day ended.

Three days later, on Wednesday, April 8th, 1795, the marriage was performed with customary state and magnificence, and, according to the favourite phrase, with great demonstrations of joy; and the public seem to have been well contented with her appearance, her good-humoured and intelligent air, and taste in dress. The ceremony took place at night, and was performed by the Archbishop of Canterbury. In the chapel the Prince gave his hat, with its rich diamond button and loop, to Lord Harcourt to hold, and then made him a present of it. The Duke of Leeds says, in his memoranda: "I could not help remarking how little conversation passed between the Prince and Princess during the procession, and the coolness and indifference apparent in the manner of the Prince. I was afterwards informed that he appeared much agitated on entering the chapel, and that during the ceremony he was perpetually looking at his favourite, Lady Jersey."

He then explains that the hat thus presented was decorated with a magnificent diamond star and buckle. Lady Harcourt was known to be the most intimate friend of Lady Jersey.

During the ceremony a strange incident was noticed. The Prince, who seemed dazed or bewildered, rose impatiently from his knees before the ceremony was half over. The Archbishop stopped, but the old King stepped forward and recalled his son to his situation. He also took the part of "prompter" through the whole ceremony, and in the hall later "shook his son's hand with a force that brought tears to his eyes."

As the newly-married pair drove from the chapel their first falling out took place. The Prince had remarked, on hearing the mob shout, that "many were interested in their happiness," at the same time taking her hand. She pettishly snatched hers away, put out at something in her reception; on which he became angry and sullen.* Such was the course of this ill-omened day.

* Lady C. Campbell, "Diary."

CHAPTER XXVII.

1795—1797.

Two days after the marriage the "happy pair" returned to Windsor, where they remained a few days. They then repaired to the Prince's rural residence at Kempshott. It seems incredible what the bride had to encounter here during her honeymoon. There was but one lady, and that one her lady-in-waiting, and the men were the "blackguard companions of the Prince, who were constantly drunk, and sleeping and snoring in boots on the sofa."* It is not surprising to learn that within two or three weeks of the marriage a sort of separation took place between the ill-starred pair. However, some decency of appearance was to be kept up. There was a visit in state to Covent Garden Theatre, where the Princess was, as it were, presented to the public for the first time; while in May a dancing fête was given at Frogmore to the "happy pair," where the ladies all appeared in white, with "Prince of Wales" plumes, and the gentlemen in blue and gold.

They were then established at Carlton House. It at once became evident that all the good advice, so laboriously impressed on the Princess, had wrought little effect; for, at the various dinner-parties given during the first two or three weeks after the marriage, she behaved so flippantly and talked so lightly that her husband called Lord Malmesbury aside and asked him "what he thought of this sort of manners;" on which he could only repeat her father's words—that, if she were not kept strictly, she would give way to this extravagance. Then the Prince reproached him with not warning him in time; to which the

* Sir G. Elliot, iii. 14. He was shown the correspondence and written complaints on these matters.

reply was given that he had acted under instructions from the King to conclude the marriage, and that such matters did not enter into his commission. It was hardly surprising that this blunt declaration should displease or leave a rankle in his mind.

It must be owned that his position had been an embarrassing one, for though he owned that he would have felt it his duty to mention any notorious or glaring defect, or such as would render the union unseemly, mere levity would not have been sufficient ground to disturb the negotiation. But the truth is, after these signs and tokens, it was scarcely surprising that the negotiator should now begin to augur the worst. "It is impossible," he says, "to foresee or conceive any comfort from this connection, in which I lament very much having taken any share, however passive it was."

The Princess, who was not nearly so volatile as Lord Malmesbury would make out, for some time bore with the treatment very patiently. She said that her father had told her to observe everything, but say nothing. Indeed, her whole course in this trying situation was at first marked by a certain amiability and prudence; and her best claim to indulgence is that she was driven into the opposite defects by a long series of outrages. She saw her lady-in-waiting invited to the Queen's House, and set down to play cards with the Princesses. The worthy old King disapproved of these proceedings, but could do nothing. All the summer the attendance of this person was forced upon her.

Lord George Seymour described to Lord Houghton a characteristic scene that occurred during this disturbed honeymoon. At a convivial party, at which assisted Lord Coleraine and others, punch and pipes were introduced. When the Lady-in-Waiting had sipped a little, the Prince, in a marked way, took her glass; on which the Princess seized Coleraine's pipe, and gave a sort of contemptuous puff at the Prince. There was a rough humour, as well as readiness, in this proceeding.

At Brighton, appearances were maintained and the gaieties kept up. The Prince introduced various friends of his, such as Sheridan, with whom he had fallen out, but was now reconciled; also Sir Sidney Smith, and the Stadtholder of Holland, whom the Brighton folk were entertained in watching.*

* The Princess commanded a play for his entertainment; in spite of her vivacity and utmost efforts, he slept and snored in the box beside her, and was roused with some difficulty when the curtain fell. A ball having been given in compliment to him at the Castle tavern, he fell asleep whilst eating his supper, and snored so loud as to disturb the harmony of the orchestra. His Dutch Highness was also entertained with a grand masquerade; and was perplexed by the difficulty of resolving in what dress or character he should attend it. The Prince of Wales said he might go as an old woman.—"Life and Reign," i. 270.

But now, on April 27th, the first steps were taken to furnish the consideration of the bargain, and the question of paying the Prince of Wales's debts was introduced to the House, and received with "marked disapprobation." The tone assumed was of the most offensive kind, and the unhappy spendthrift was lectured and reprobated. Mr. Pitt took a high strain. The debts, he said, must be paid out of the income, which would be increased; but no gross sum would be granted. There were loud complaints of broken faith on the part of the Prince and his friends, and it was openly said that the minister had violated his engagements. This was no doubt the proper course, as a general discharge would only be an encouragement to incur fresh liabilities. On this Colonel Stanley, a Lancashire member, moved that the old engagement and promise given to Parliament in 1787 should be read. In the discussion that followed, the Prince felt himself humiliated to an extraordinary degree, as he was treated like a spendthrift and pauper; but this he had brought on himself.

In May, when the general plan came on for discussion, it was stated by Mr. Pitt that the Prince's income was about £73,000 a year (including the Cornwall revenue). This he proposed to raise to a sum of £125,000 a year, without adding the Duchy, which would make together nearly £140,000, with £26,000 for Carlton House (a bottomless gulf), and £28,000 for jewels and outfit. But the debts were found to reach the enormous sum of £630,000, all incurred since the last settlement! His proposal was that £25,000 should be set apart yearly; and it was calculated this sum would clear off all in twenty-seven years. Further, any arrear beyond three months should not be recoverable at law. Such was the plan of extrication. It was certainly infinitely mortifying for the Prince. His party either held aloof, or gave but cold support. Mr. Grey was even hostile. After declaring himself as ready to support the splendour of the royal family, as "any slippery sycophant of the Court," he announced that, "considering the distress of the people and their burdens, it was a most unfitting time to make a demand for satisfying extravagance." He added that no matter how exalted the Prince's rank, he should descend to the level of other embarrassed persons, compound with his creditors and retrench his establishment. His tone, indeed, was almost studiously blunt and offensive, and the Prince never seems to have forgiven it. He concluded by moving that £40,000 a year in addition would be sufficient. Mr. Fox supported the ministerial proposal but coldly, though he suggested that the King should contribute, and contrasted the large allowance made to the civil list. His suggestion was that

the debts should be paid off speedily, by allotting £65,000 a year and the Duchy revenues.

These debates and recriminations were continued for some weeks, when the Prince found himself compelled to come forward and put himself humbly in the hands of the House. His Attorney-General, Mr. Anstruther, made the following communication: "That his Royal Highness was desirous to acquiesce in whatever might be the sentiments of the House, both in respect to the future regulations of his expenditure, and the appropriation of any part of the income they might think fit to grant him for the discharge of his debts; his wish, on the present occasion, was to consult the wisdom of Parliament. He was perfectly disposed to acquiesce in whatever abatement of splendour they might judge to be necessary, from a view of his situation; and desired to have nothing but what the country might cordially be induced to think he ought to have. In fine, that his Royal Highness left all matters relative to the regulation of his establishment and the payment of his debts, to their wisdom and discretion, with the assurance that whatever measures they might adopt would meet with his hearty concurrence."

This was opposed to all the arguments his friends had been urging. And Mr. Pitt was not slow to press the advantage. Indeed, it will be seen that this was always a characteristic of the Prince—to abandon a course no matter how vehemently championed, when another better suited his purpose.

On this failure of these attempts he is said to have written to Lord Fitzwilliam and Mr. Fox, offering to put himself at the head of the party, and oppose all measures of the Government. But they dissuaded him from this course.

But a very reasonable plea in his favour had been put forward, which was certainly embarrassing enough to deal with. This was the claim, by way of set-off, to the revenues of the Duchy during his minority. These had been appropriated by the King, on the high German tradition of paternal despotism, and when the claims became inconvenient, the reply was that the revenues had been absorbed by the expenses of education. No account was rendered till the present discussion, when Mr. Pitt was obliged to admit that a sum of nearly £234,000 had been received. The Government had to make an extraordinary defence. It pleaded the Statute of Limitation—the claims of Parliament, which had paid his debts, and the cost of his outfit, which must be set off. Then the expenses of his education had been £83,000. All this was mere special pleading. The claim of Parliament could not hold, as the Prince could hardly be considered a bankrupt,

who had to give up all his assets to those who gave him relief. Mr. Fox declared that, by the return before them, the expenses of education were £40,000, of which half should certainly be charged to the Duke of York, who had the same preceptors, etc. He made out also, that the accumulated revenues, with interest, amounted to £500,000. Surely, he said, the King, like any other father, might fairly undertake the modest charges of bringing up his children. But it has been already shown how the King himself left on record the penurious calculations made for the support of his younger children, and the same scale was no doubt applied to the support of his eldest child. The annual expense for many years could not have exceeded £3000, of which one-half, or say two-thirds only, should have been charged to the Prince, leaving an enormous balance. The King's own debts had been enormous, and these arrears had been used to discharge them.* Fortunately we have satisfactory evidence in support of Mr. Fox's contention, that the Prince's education and maintenance had cost but little, and by reference to the Palace accounts, kept with great accuracy and minuteness, and preserved in the British Museum, it will be seen what trifling sums in the wages to services, salary of governess, etc., had been expended.

"The Prince," said Mr. Sheridan, "had often done him the honour to consult him, chiefly because his royal highness knew his fixed determination to accept no favours; and he took that opportunity of declaring that he had never received any presents of great value from the Prince. He had, he said, advised him not to make the promise he made in 1787, from the improbability of its being kept. He had at that time drawn up a plan of retrenchment, which was approved by the Prince and by his Majesty; and the Prince told him the promise was not to be insisted upon, though to his great surprise he found it inserted in the King's message, which had been seen by his royal highness. The Prince wished him to retract it, but this he declined. Ministers had then a check upon the expenditure of his royal highness, which they had never enforced; they had never interposed to stop a shameful profusion of money upon Carlton House."

Such was this singular declaration, inspired of course by the Prince. There was certainly truth as to the sums lavished on Carlton House, and it will have seemed surprising to find

* Mr. Nicholl states that these fines for the Duchy leases amounted to £250,000, powers being given by Act of Parliament. It should be added, too, that all the revenues of the Bishopric of Osnaburg, accruing during the Duke of York's minority, were paid to him on his coming of age.

additional sums paid without demur which had not been voted originally by Parliament.*

The original proposals were privately agreed to; the Prince, though Mr. Whitbread and others declared that it was degrading to the Prince, accepting them cheerfully, through Mr. Lambton, his friend. A jointure of £50,000 a year was then voted for the Princess, rather late, it might be thought, and the odd provision for preventing the Prince incurring fresh debts was adopted. Commissioners were named for examining claims and discharging them. Some of the salaries were fourteen quarters in arrear. The various heads of offices in the Prince's household were made responsible for the expenses in their departments, a singularly inquisitorial proceeding. But astonishment must have been excited by a most extraordinary harangue of the Duke of Clarence, in favour of his brother, in which he declared bluntly "that the marriage was part of a bargain, the price being the payment of his debts. Advantage then had been taken of the difficulties in which he was involved, in order to procure from him this consent. He was in the situation of a man who, if he cannot get a haunch of venison, will rather take any other haunch than go without."

In this speech he showed that honest and earnest but indiscreet partisanship which distinguished him through life.

This business, thus arranged, gave rise to many harsh comments, the one that had most plausibility being that the Prince had "constituted himself a bankrupt;" for the fact that a regular commission was appointed (consisting of the Speaker, Chancellor of the Exchequer, Master of the Rolls, the Master of the King's Household, the Accountant of the Court of Chancery, and the Surveyor of the Crown Lands), together with an investigation and abatement of all tradesmen's claims, rather lent the air of a "composition with creditors." It was the occasion of much discontent and some injustice, the commission holding a regular court, and abating all claims by ten per cent. It is obvious that this proceeding could not affect the demands of creditors who might enforce them in the regular tribunals of the country. And one of this body actually did so—his jeweller, named Jeffereys,† whose complaints and attacks were to harass the Prince for many years to come.

On the marriage of the Prince, he had received a magnificent order of jewels for presents. No limit, he says, was fixed. The

* Rose, "Diaries." Why the King should have paid these sums, trusting to have been afterwards indemnified, seems strange, unless we assume he had some reason for gratifying the Prince in this his favourite hobby.

† This man was for a time a member of Parliament.

finest and best of everything was to be provided. As of course, the nation being paymaster, £54,000 was laid out for the bride, with £10,000 as presents for the Queen and Princesses. Even the Prince's miniature, which was sent out in a jewelled frame, cost over £4000! When his claims came before the commission, they were placed at the enormous amount of £85,000, which included bonds of the Prince's old debts. As the jeweller declined to submit to the reduction, he brought actions for the whole amount, which he recovered, the Prince encouraging him in this step. He had, notwithstanding, to accept the deductions; but the balance was paid in debentures. It is characteristic of the persons who had dealings of this kind with the Prince, that their behaviour should have always been of the most selfish and ungrateful kind. This man, who had received such large sums, now began to annoy the Prince with demands for redress of his grievances.*

Jeffereys soon after was totally ruined. Then began a series of piteous appeals, which took the shape of threatening letters; and it was only when he had a pamphlet ready that the friendly Lord Moira, who in delicate matters acted as his master's agent, had to treat with him privately. But nothing came of the interview, and Jeffereys began to publish a series of pamphlets full of attacks, chiefly on Mrs. Fitzherbert. These ran through many editions.

Though the arrangement made might be assumed to be a fairly satisfactory one, the Prince took his favourite mode of showing his discontent—by exaggerated and theatrical reduction of his establishment. Lord Cholmondeley now addressed a circular to the household, dispensing with their services. Four ladies of the bedchamber were retained, with Lords Jersey and Cholmondeley as masters of the horse and of the household—the latter declining his salary of £2000 a year.

* He complained that his reception at Carlton House was cold and distant: "I attended twice, each time by appointment, and waited many hours. At last the Prince, coming into the room with several gentlemen, asked me, in a hasty tone of voice, 'what I wanted?' I was so agitated with the contemplation of my own situation, and so confused by the unusual mode in which his royal highness spoke to me, as to be hardly able to make any answer. His royal highness then said: 'I believe I owe you some money—£120; do you want it now?' I humbly replied, when it suited his royal highness's convenience. The Prince said, 'Very well,' and left the room without another word; nor was I able to form any expectation when it would be repaid." The Prince, too, had to endure all the regular annoyances of an impecunious debtor. Hamlet, Gray, Vuillamy were some of these unlucky *fournisseurs*. It was told of Vuillamy that, being always denied to the Prince, he lay in wait at the gate, and with much agitation and despair told the Prince that "unless paid, he would be in his Papa's Bench."

Meanwhile the new *ménage* was not going on happily, and presently an extraordinary business was to excite the curiosity of the gossips and the disgust of the judicious. Early in 1796 there appeared an appeal to the public, in the shape of a pamphlet by Lord Jersey, written to vindicate his wife from a strange charge. The transaction had occurred in the preceding year.

One Dr. Randolph, a clergyman, had undertaken to carry a packet of letters for the Princess to her relations in Brunswick. Not going abroad, however, he sent back the letters to the writer. They never reached her, and soon after the Princess had good grounds for suspicion, if not for certainty, that the Queen had read their contents, and resented the manner in which she had been described.

The Princess, indeed, admitted that the lost letters contained free but confidential remarks of the kind. There were highly suspicious circumstances in the case. When the clergyman gave up his journey, he despatched the packet as a common parcel, booking it, he said, by the Brighton coach. He addressed it to Lady Jersey, who was with the Princess at Brighton. As the Princess had placed the packet in his hands, he might have thought it was important enough to be returned in a more formal manner than by a common carrier.

It is admitted that the parcel was regularly "booked" and directed to Lady Jersey, so it would not have been difficult to trace it. There were recriminations on all sides, but the matter was never cleared up; and it was rather happily said that Lord Jersey's vindication wanted but one thing to make it satisfactory, viz. "his avowal that he knew nothing at all about the matter." Altogether a most significant token of the happy relations in the royal family.

Every day the Princess's position was indeed growing more distressing. She was soon to be confined, and this, it might be supposed, would secure her more indulgence. She complained piteously to a German friend of the dislike of the Queen and her sisters-in-law; that whatever she did was misrepresented. The people alone were kind.

While thus engaged in domestic troubles, a strange sympathy for the Irish nation seized on the Prince. He had not forgotten the compliment paid to him by the Irish Parliament, when the Regency was impending. He had latterly been thrown a good deal with some of the patriots. Mr. Grattan and Lady Louisa Connolly, Lord Colchester tells us, actually persuaded him that he ought to be appointed Viceroy of Ireland. It is stated, indeed, that a formal request to this effect, signed by Grattan, was tendered to him, praying him to undertake the government

of the country. On this subject he himself addressed Mr. Pitt in some lengthy letters, setting out the dangerous state of the country, and volunteering to go and pacify it. The minister declined to make any such representation to his Majesty.

Nearly thirty years later, when as George IV. he was strenuously resisting Catholic emancipation, and distracting the ministry by his vehement opposition, the Duke of Wellington seems to have "looked up" these rather compromising documents, no doubt with a view to refute the theory that the King had always been a "Protestant Prince."

Everything in the first of these documents is in the Prince's peculiar style; the abundance of italicised words is all his own. No doubt the topics and arguments had been supplied to him by his Irish friends.

MEMORIAL TO MR. PITT FROM THE PRINCE OF WALES.

"London, 8th Feb. 1797.

"I trust that the *importance* of the *subject*, added to the *interest* I must naturally feel in the *safety and welfare of the State*, as well as in whatever affects the *honour of his Majesty's Crown*, and the happiness and prosperity of *my father's reign*, will apologise for the desire I feel to call the attention of ministers to the following considerations :

"The situation of Ireland at this moment demands their most serious attention, and ought to engage them to leave nothing undone to prevent *the calamities* that would arise to Great Britain from a *civil war*. The value and importance of Ireland cannot be adequately estimated or sufficiently prized ; and its loss or separation would be the most mortal blow that this kingdom could receive. This is well known to every man who is acquainted with the relative situations of the two kingdoms.

"The French Government appears to be now thoroughly apprised of this truth ; and by their late expedition, fitted out at a prodigious expense, and sent in the *depth of winter*, when an attempt on the Irish coast was generally deemed impracticable, they have shown that they thus consider *no expense too great*, *no risk sufficient* to deter them from the prosecution of the plans they have formed for the purpose of depriving Great Britain of the aid, support, and advantages derived from Ireland. The *first attempt* has failed ; but the French, by an *enterprise unequalled in their history*, have gained advantages that would more than compensate them for the loss of the *whole expedition*, if every ship had perished in the storm. They have destroyed the security we enjoyed from our *insular situation*. They have proved, by an experiment, that our coasts may be attempted with

impunity by an *inferior fleet*, and have *destroyed a prepossession* that had grown venerable by age, and was worthy a fleet of 50 sail and 50,000 men to this kingdom; but they could not attempt an invasion without having *beat our fleet* and being *masters at sea*. From the circumstances of a part of the Toulon fleet having been brought round to Brest, and of the preparations being continued in that port subsequent to the sailing of the expedition under Hoche, in December, there is reason to conclude that the plan was of a very extensive and alarming nature; and if the *first landing* had taken place, that it would have been followed up and supported by *successive expeditions*, either to act in concert with the first, or to divide our attention and strength by a *diversion* in the coasts of England or Scotland.

“So far their intentions appear manifest, and *from the continuance of the preparations* in their channel ports, as well as their avowed *declarations* and the *aspect of affairs on the Continent*, it is reasonable to suppose that the *attempt will be renewed*; and however they may threaten or infest the coasts of this kingdom, that *Ireland will be the point of their operations*. This might have been doubtful *before* the late attempt; it can scarcely be so now.

“The French have declared that they went to Ireland as *friends*, and not as *enemies*. I hope they would have been deceived in their expectations. But still the opinion must have been formed either from direct communications from that country, or from known circumstances operating to discontent in that kingdom; or lastly, from a conviction arising out of the former of their being able to propose superior advantages to Ireland from a connection with them.

“That the French have been excited by direct communications from Ireland, there is reason to suppose, from the number of districts in the north of that kingdom that have been *proclaimed* by Government to be in a *state of insurrection*.

“I shall not question the wisdom or policy of such proclamations. If they do not originate in party disputes and private quarrels, they increase and extend them; and one dangerous effect of them is evident: they render the *proclaimed districts* desperate, and give *encouragement to a foreign enemy*. And if I am rightly informed, the districts so proclaimed are not the most dissatisfied or the most dangerous parts of the kingdom.

“I understand that the town of Belfast, though not proclaimed, is in reality the centre of *dissatisfaction*, and perhaps I might say *disaffection*; and that the wealthy and independent Presbyterians of the north are at the bottom of all the secret machinations that agitate the kingdom.

“Whatever the *private views* of the leaders may be, they have hitherto confined themselves to demand a *Parliamentary Reform*. In this they have acted artfully, by comprehending the *Roman Catholic claims* in their demands, and thus forming *two* bodies, hitherto opposed, *into one*, under the title of *United Irishmen*.

“If the *secret object* of this union be a *revolution in the Government* and a *separation* from Great Britain, as there is too much reason to apprehend, it is alarming from its *object* and formidable from its *numbers*; and a moment should not be lost to disunite its members, particularly as I hope the Roman Catholics are *not, as yet*, to any degree tainted with *disaffection*, though they may be led by degrees to go the *full lengths* with the Presbyterians.

“If it be alleged that very *few* indulgences remain to be granted to the Roman Catholics, and those not of a nature to interest the multitude, I should say that the man is little acquainted with human nature, who does not know that mankind is more guided by *pride* and *passion* than by *interest*, and that an affront operates more forcibly than an injury. Besides, the rich and powerful few in *this* case influence the thoughtless and unreflecting many; and the term *emancipation*, applicable only to a state of slavery, is selected on this occasion to indicate the general sense entertained and propagated on that head among the people.

“Without, therefore, entering into a fruitless inquiry whether the discontent on this score be just and founded, it is sufficient that the discontent exists, and that the party in Ireland who are suspected of Republican principles, and of being inclined to a connection with France, make use of this grievance, *supposed* or *real*, to attach the Roman Catholics to their views and *form a common cause*.

“Without also entering into the policy of withholding or refusing these concessions on former occasions, I shall only say that circumstances may render it prudent to grant at one time what has been refused at another, and that without any inconsistency; and, therefore, without any retrospect to what is past, I feel myself called upon to declare *my decided opinion* that *no time ought to be lost in repealing every exclusive restriction and disqualification on the Irish Roman Catholics*. If formerly the *suprema lex* justified these prohibitory statutes—and on no other principle can they be justified—I am persuaded that it now imperiously demands their repeal. The Irish Roman Catholics are naturally loyal and attached to monarchy; they have behaved well in a distinguished manner on the late threatened invasion. The affectionate attachment and zeal they have shown

on that trying occasion deserve every possible return from the throne; and any concession granted in consequence will appear a reward for past services, and encourage to future exertion; and, above all, by exciting warm and grateful sentiments, for which the Irish are particularly distinguished, it may be fairly expected that such a measure would *detach the Roman Catholics* from the disaffected party, without appearing to have that for its object.

“If this measure be adopted, I should express my wish and readiness to undertake the government of Ireland—great and arduous as the task appears under the present circumstances—with a view of securing the full benefit of this concession to the throne, and in the hopes of more firmly attaching that valuable kingdom to the Crown of Great Britain, and animating the spirit of that loyal and affectionate people to the most powerful exertions against our desperate enemy, if they should again renew their attempts upon that kingdom.

“I am thoroughly aware of the great responsibility that attaches to ministers on the score of Ireland. If my opinion be adopted, I am willing to *share that responsibility with them*; if it is not, *it must remain with them*. I recommend it to them to grant this boon *before* it is asked. If it is asked, it must be granted; but it will then appear extorted from our fear, and not granted from our affection, and the whole benefit will be lost. I recommend a *preventive* measure, and request them to weigh it with the consideration its importance requires. The *interval of suspended invasion* is favourable, and should be improved with the most sedulous attention, in order to adopt *this and such other measures* as promise most effectually to divert the impending storm or to *break its force*.

“I shall *at present* forbear to consider the *other measures* that it may be proper to adopt for *conciliating the affections and extinguishing the dissensions* that agitate parts of that kingdom, as likewise the *relative advantages* that may be held out by France and Spain to Ireland on the score of *commercial intercourse*. These are subjects of great importance, that will naturally present themselves to the *judgment and penetration of ministers*.

“I cannot suppose that *they* will impute the loyal behaviour of the Irish Roman Catholics on the late occasion to a *perfect acquiescence in the situation*, and from thence infer that the *present system* should be continued. So *perverse a mode of reasoning* may prove fatal in a future trial, as it is aggravating *injustice with insult*. Neither do I believe that, from the appearance of zeal and loyalty exhibited by all ranks, they will infer that there is neither *dissatisfaction nor disaffection* in that kingdom, though

they did not break out into open action while the fate of the French expedition was uncertain. What might have happened if the *expedition had succeeded*, and the French *landed in force*, may be more doubtful. I fear it is too well known that both do exist to a considerable degree; and their not having burst out into acts of violence proves only more *caution* and *prudence* than were to be expected, but leaves us ignorant of the *magnitude* and *extent of the danger*.

“G. P.”

SECOND MEMORIAL ADDRESSED TO MR. PITT.

“Carlton House, May 29th, 1797.

“In the beginning of last February I transmitted to his Majesty’s ministers my thoughts on the state of Ireland, recommending to the Cabinet conciliatory measures, as they appeared to me indispensably necessary in order to secure the well-affected, to attach the minds of the Irish nation to the Crown, and to prevent civil war and rebellion, of which symptoms had even then appeared in that kingdom.

“I had the mortification to find the measures I recommended disapproved of, and that a system of coercion was to be pursued in the government of Ireland. Lamenting the adoption of such a system, and deploring the consequences that it must necessarily produce, I have notwithstanding preserved silence hitherto on the subject, that ministers might give that system a fair trial. But, having now done so, and the menacing circumstances increasing every day, I should consider a further silent acquiescence as betraying the dearest interests both of my king and country; for I regard it as the first duty imposed on me by my situation to endeavour, by every means in my power, to prevent the effusion of civil blood, and to avert the misfortunes incident on a rebellion in Ireland and the loss of that kingdom.

“In the month of February last I could only state what I conceived to be the probable consequences of neglecting to adopt conciliatory measures. I can now appeal to the report of the Committee of Secrecy of the Irish House of Commons on certain papers seized in Belfast on the 14th April last, and laid before the House on the 29th of that month.

“The report is deficient as to dates; but it appears from it that the Society of United Irishmen had been formed as early as 1791, for the express purpose of separating Ireland from Great Britain. It appears also, by a return dated December 7th, 1796, that the above society had at that period gained 59,688 adherents in the province of Ulster. From the month of October, 1796, the system of coercion had been rigorously pursued without inter-

ruption or opposition from any quarter. On the contrary, the whole strength and loyalty of the kingdom have been called forth, and corps of yeomanry embodied throughout the kingdom, for the purpose of strengthening the hands of Government.

“And yet, notwithstanding every effort of administration backed by a great military force, the report states that in four months, from December to April, the number of United Irishmen had increased from 59,688 to 99,411; and the county of Meath, one of the most turbulent in the kingdom, is included in the former and not in the latter; if it had, the numbers would have nearly doubled. The fair conclusion is, that the system of coercion had in four months spread as great disaffection to the Government as the Society of United Irishmen had been able to do in the five preceding years.

“So alarming an increase can alone be accounted for by the avowal of this system, coupled with the declaration of the Irish ministers in both Houses of Parliament in that kingdom—that no further concessions would be made by Government to the Roman Catholics; a declaration that I must condemn as unwise and impolitic, and originating in unparalleled ingratitude to a description of men who had shown the greatest zeal, loyalty, and sound principles by their distinguished exertions in the public cause when their country was threatened with a French invasion.

“If a French fleet should again visit the coasts of Ireland, could ministers depend on the cordial co-operation of the Irish Roman Catholics, as in the month of December last? and, if not, I must infer that the neglecting the measures of conciliation that I recommended, and pursuing an opposite system, have actually alienated the affections of the then loyal and friendly Roman Catholics of that kingdom.

“The papers of the Ulster committee only have been seized, and the report is consequently confined to that province. It throws no light on the state of the other three provinces, in which the proportion of Roman Catholics is much greater than in Ulster; so that I think it will not appear exaggerated if we allow that they may contain 100,000 more of United Irishmen.

“If, then, ministers advert to the rapidity with which this society have gained converts to their principles, and make any allowance for their further extension, I should recommend it to them to weigh again the probability of success in pursuing a system of coercion. That system was fully and fatally tried in America, and failed. The Irish are a brave and high-spirited people, and more numerous than the Americans were at the commencement of hostilities. France is more in a situation to give them assistance and support; and Great Britain, by the

very defection of Ireland, less able to carry on a contest, weakened as she is by the expensive straggles of the last four years.

“There are many circumstances that ministers will further take into consideration that have occurred since February last, to which it is sufficient to advert without enlarging on them, as, the temper of the navy and army, and the number of Irishmen in both; the peace agreed on between the Emperor and France; above all, the certainty that the Irish militia have been tampered with, and the danger of their joining their countrymen in the case of open insurrection.

“But in one view it is sufficient that the disaffection of numerous bodies of men in Ireland is proved beyond a doubt by the report. I consequently appeal to ministers if any system of coercion, however successful, can remove that disaffection; and if his Majesty’s ministers be not called on to try every possible means to satisfy the people by removing the causes of the dissatisfaction; and to endeavour to regain the confidence and affection of the Irish nation before an open rebellion widens the breach; for conciliatory measures must, in any supposed issue to the contest, be resorted to at last; and what must be resorted to after bloodshed, and all the horrors of a civil war, ought to be tried at least in the first instance to prevent them.

“That the Irish will rise in their demands every day that arrangement is deferred, is very certain. That the same measures that might have satisfied them in February last, may not do so now, I am inclined to suspect. But I have but one decided opinion, that no time should be lost in still trying conciliatory measures to the utmost extent. A strong military force may secure temporary advantages; but no force can long coerce a nation of four millions of people, united in sentiment and interests.

“I must once more earnestly recommend conciliatory measures, and I adjure you to pause on the awful brink of civil war, and to avert its fatal consequences. Dissatisfaction is fast spreading in this kingdom, from a variety of causes; and a civil war with Ireland would certainly increase it, and produce great divisions and differences of sentiment, the consequence of which may extend far beyond what human prudence can foresee or calculate.

“I request that this paper may be commended to the Cabinet, and I wish it to be considered as containing my decided sentiments on the subject of Ireland.

“G. P.”

CHAPTER XXVIII.

1796.

On January 7th, 1796, at twenty minutes past nine, the Princess of Wales was delivered of a daughter. The Duke of Leeds, the Archbishop of Canterbury, and other noble persons were in attendance all night. The shaggy-browed Thurlow was present by the Prince's invitation. The Princess was in a critical way for a time, and it was rumoured that "her life was saved by the intelligent friendship of a distinguished statesman." The agitation of the Prince was conspicuous, and indeed the excitement which was part of his character seems to have actually led him to devotion.* This amiable agitation would have been more sincere had it been supported by acts; but it is painful to have to relate that as the crisis drew near he did not show any delicate consideration for her situation. Thus his angry father shortly after the event addressed him this reproof:

THE KING TO THE PRINCE OF WALES.

Read on 12th of Aug.

"[GEORGIUS REX.] II

"The professions you have lately made in your letters of your particular regard to me are so contradictory to your actions, that I cannot suffer myself to be imposed upon by them. You know very well you did not give the least intimation to me

* "With a due sense of that religion," says an admirer, "the exercise of which had thrown such a pure and unsullied splendour over a well-spent life, he morning and night, surrounded by his family, offered up his prayers to that Being who "can soothe the pangs of the mother, and still the cries of the infant."—Huish, "Life of Princess Charlotte," i, 11.

or to the Queen that the Princess was with child till within a month of the birth of the young Princess.

"You removed the Princess twice in the week immediately preceding the day of her delivery from the place of my residence, in expectation (as you voluntarily declared) of her labour; and both times, upon your return, you industriously concealed from the knowledge of me and the Queen every circumstance relating to this important affair; and you at last, without giving notice to me or to the Queen, precipitately hurried the Princess from Hampton Court in a condition not to be named. After having thus, in execution of your own determined measures, exposed both the Princess and her child to the greatest perils, you now plead surprise and tenderness for the Princess as the only motives that occasioned these repeated indignities to me, and to the Queen your mother.

"This extravagant and ungrateful behaviour in so essential a point as the birth of an heir to my crown, is such an evidence of your premeditated defiance of me and contempt of my authority, and of the natural right belonging to your parents, as cannot be excused by the pretended innocence of your intentions, nor palliated or disguised by specious words only; but the whole tenor of your conduct for a considerable time has been so entirely void of all real duty to me, that I have long had reason to be highly offended with you; and until you withdraw your regard and confidence from those by whose instigation and advice you are aided and encouraged in your unwarrantable behaviour to me and to the Queen, and until you return to your duty, you shall not reside in my palace, which I will not suffer to be made the resort of them who, under the appearance of an attachment to you, foment the division which you have made in my family, and thereby weakened the common interest of the whole.

"In this situation I will receive no reply; but when your actions manifest a just sense of your duty and submission, that may induce me to pardon what at present I most justly resent.

"In the mean time, it is my pleasure that you leave St. James's with all your family when it can be done without prejudice or inconvenience to the Princess.

"I shall for the present leave to the Princess the care of my granddaughter, until a proper time calls upon me to consider of her education.

"G. R."* II

On February 11th the royal child was christened CHARLOTTE AUGUSTA, destined with her father and mother, uncle and aunt, to form one ill-fated circle. The name Charlotte was chosen in

* "Memoirs of Lord Brougham," ii. 155.

compliment to the Queen ; Augusta, in honour of her mother and grandmother.

There were of course great rejoicings, but it was unfortunate that even on this occasion the Prince's humour should have drawn him into a foolish embarrassment. The Corporation of London desiring to present an address, were informed that the Prince, having now reduced his establishment, was unable to receive their address "in a manner suitable to his situation." It was intimated that the address might be sent to him. The Common Council immediately passed a resolution to the effect that it was inconsistent with their dignity to present it in any but the usual way. The Prince, alarmed, sent for the Lord Mayor to explain. "His royal highness," said this functionary, "declared that his sentiments, he conceived, had been mistaken or misunderstood, or at least a very different construction had been given to them than he meant, or was intended to be conveyed by that letter. He thought it incumbent on him to preserve a consistent character ; that as his establishment, for certain reasons, had been reduced, and that the necessary state appendages attached to the character and rank of the Prince of Wales did not in consequence exist, his royal highness conceived he could not receive an address in state, and particularly from the Corporation of the City of London, for which he entertained the highest veneration and respect." In situations like this he could always acquit himself gracefully enough.

Scarcely was the Princess recovered when the old state of things was renewed. The Prince quitted Carlton House, and removed to Windsor about the middle of March. This was what Lord Colchester calls "an open difference," though at the opera they were noticed to affect an extraordinary cordiality. The same peer declares she was used unpardonably—obliged to dine alone, seeing no one but old people selected for her by the Queen and Lady Jersey, who were on excellent terms. Neither was she allowed to go anywhere except to take airings in the Park. Angered at last by this treatment, she began to utter complaints, appealing now to the King, now to the Prince, who for many weeks had not seen her. The reply she received through Lady Cholmondeley was that "they ought to separate!" This proposal seems to have been repeatedly made, but she declared she would be quite happy to live with him, provided a change was made in his behaviour. In April, as she herself said to her friend, "Well, after I lay in—*je vous jure*, 'tis true, upon my honour, upon my soul 'tis true—I received a message through Lord Cholmondeley to tell me I never was to have de great honour of inhabiting de same room wid my husband again. I

said: 'Very well; but as my memory was short, I begged to have dis polite message in writing from him.' I had it, and was free."*

The extraordinary letter that was sent to her is well known.

"April 30, 1796.

"MADAM,

"As Lord Cholmondeley informs me that you wish I would define, in writing, the terms upon which we are to live, I shall endeavour to explain myself on that head with as much clearness, and with as much propriety as the nature of the subject will admit. Our inclinations are not in our power, nor should either of us be held answerable to the other because nature has not made us suitable to each other. Tranquil and comfortable society is, however, in our power; let our intercourse, therefore, be restricted to that, and I will distinctly subscribe to the condition which you required through Lady Cholmondeley, that even in the event of any accident happening to my daughter (which I trust Providence in its mercy will avert) I shall not infringe the terms of the restriction by proposing, at any period, a connection of a more particular nature. I shall now finally close this disagreeable correspondence, trusting that, as we have completely explained ourselves to each other, the rest of our lives will be passed in uninterrupted tranquillity.

"I am, Madam,

"With great truth, very sincerely yours,

"Windsor Castle, April 30th, 1796."

"GEORGE P.

This cynical document is unique, the most unpleasant portion being the pious appeal to "Providence in its mercy" and the convenient principles of morality laid down. To this she replies in French on May 6, and the letters afford a strange contrast:

"The avowal of your conversation with Lord Cholmondeley neither surprises nor offends me. It merely confirmed what you have tacitly insinuated for this twelvemonth. But after this it would be a want of delicacy, or rather an unworthy meanness in me, were I to complain of those conditions which you impose upon yourself.

"I should have returned no answer to your letter if it had not been conceived in terms to make it doubtful whether this arrangement proceeds from you or from me; and you are aware that the credit of it belongs to you alone.

* "Diary of George IV." i. 37.

"The letter which you announce to me as the last obliges me to communicate to the King, as to my sovereign and my father, both your avowal and my answer. You will find enclosed the copy of my letter to the King. I apprise you of it, that I may not incur the slightest reproach of duplicity from you. As I have at this moment no protector but his Majesty, I refer myself solely to him upon this subject; and if my conduct meets his approbation I shall be in some degree at least consoled. I retain every sentiment of gratitude for the situation in which I find myself as Princess of Wales; enabled, by your means, to indulge in the free exercise of a virtue dear to my heart—I mean charity.

"It will be my duty likewise to act upon another motive, that of giving an example of patience and resignation under every trial.

"Do me the justice to believe that I shall never cease to pray for your happiness, and to be

"Your much devoted

"May 6, 1796."

(Signed)

"CAROLINE.

The delay of nearly a week was owing to her deliberations as to which course she was to take. She thought first of writing to her parents, and even of returning to them; then of appealing to the King to bring about a reconciliation. Lord Cholmondeley gave her to understand with much politeness the Prince disliked her too cordially to think of such a thing. The King did make some attempts at arrangement, but matters had gone too far. He suggested an arrangement that she should have an allowance of £20,000; but, advised by friends who were beginning to gather about her, she rejected the pension, and declared that her bills should be sent to the Prince;* and some rooms were to be kept for her at Carlton House, as a sort of *pied de terre*, the Prince retiring to Windsor or Brighton. Thus was war declared.

There could be but one opinion on the behaviour of the husband that could come to an irreconcilable breach with his wife within the first year. His defence, "that he had taken a dislike to her," or, as he put it, "our inclinations are not in our power"—almost childish—puts him out of court. The honest public, which soon learned the truth, at once took her side. At the opera she was applauded "with a transport of affectionate respect." She came attended by her ladies—Lady Carnarvon and Mrs. Fitzroy—and with the Duke of Leeds, to whom she said she supposed the public had "been acquainted with

* Lloyd, p. 221.

what was very *trop vrai*;" that "the Prince had not spoken to her for three months past, but that she had nothing to reproach herself with." The Duke of Leeds, in his "Memoranda," describes her agitation and even alarm at this reception, and her natural remark that when the Prince came to town "she supposed she would be guillotined for what had passed that evening." Yet, notwithstanding this treatment, she still pressed for reconciliation; only firmly stipulating that the chief cause of their difference should be dismissed from her service.*

At this time it is clearly shown that the Princess was driven by a consistent course of ill-treatment to the follies of her later life. All her friends now were people known for their rank, respectability, and character. Even the rude Thurlow thus spoke of her to the Duke of Leeds. "He thought with me the Prince's strange conduct could only be imputed to madness, and expressed himself as much struck by the good sense and discretion of the Princess. He declared the letter to the King, for which he very undeservedly had the credit, was written by the Princess of her own will, and, though in his presence, without assistance from him." She made a very humble and most proper appeal to the Prince, to be relieved from her attendance; also to the King. Her request could not be refused, as the public were now beginning to clamour against the indecency of the proceeding. The King, in a fatherly and admirable letter, advised another attempt at reconciliation, now that her wishes had been complied with in regard to the lady-in-waiting. He advised her to show a wish that the Prince should return to her; on both sides all reproaches should be avoided, as well as any confidences in third parties. The tone of the letter was most cordial, affectionate, and sensible. On the same day the poor Princess wrote to her husband an eager and humble letter, which it would have been hard to resist.

"I avail myself with the greatest ardour of the King's desire, whose letter shows me that you are willing to yield to his wishes, which fills me with the greatest delight. I look forward with

* This favourite was soon dismissed, supplanted by others. Another Lady Jersey, her daughter-in-law, became the object of his enmity. Mr. Rogers one night found himself seated with her at a ball in a long gallery, down which the Regent had entered without seeing her. When he saw her he stopped a moment, but could not retreat, then marched past her with a look of the utmost disdain. "She returned the look," says Mr. Rogers, "and then turning to me with a smile, said: 'Did not I do it well?'"—"Table Talk." Such were the contests in which our Prince came off victorious; such, too, is the fate that attends the too obsequious service of princes.

infinite pleasure to the moment that will bring you to Carlton House, and that will for ever terminate a misunderstanding, which, on my side, I assure you, will never be thought of again. If you do me the honour of seeking my society in future, I will do everything to make it agreeable to you. If I should displease you, you must be generous enough to forgive me, and count upon my gratitude, which I shall feel to the end of my life. I may look for this, as mother of your daughter, and as one who is ever yours."

That this appeal would be unfruitful is evident. A month later, the Duke of Leeds, as he tells in his interesting "Memo-randa," informed her that he would leave the Duchess at Weymouth, "as long as her liking for the place continued;" when the Princess exclaimed: "*Ah! vous n'êtes pas tyran!*" On the same authority we learn that Lady Cholmondeley could venture to say to the Queen that "she wondered the Prince would ever return to Carlton House, after the usage he had received."

Some of the Princesses were eager for family quiet, and the Queen was seen to "speak good-humouredly twice" to the Princess of Wales at the Drawing Room. The latter, naturally finding that it was hopeless to look for being reconciled to the Prince, now removed to Montague House (or Villa), at Charlton, near Blackheath. She was not allowed to have her child with her, who was kept at Carlton House under the direction of Lady Elgin with Miss Hayman, the sub-governess. Mrs. Harcourt and Miss Garth were the Princess's ladies. So envenomed was the factious spirit in this unhappy quarrel, that it was given out that the Prince "set on" drivers of the Greenwich coaches to run her carriage down; and once her life was in actual peril. The Prince himself lived at Carlton House in his old style, but had not much time to devote to his child. It was thus that the Prince impressed the sub-governess at the first interview, by his gracious and elegant manners:

"In going across the hall I met his royal highness full butt in the doorway, coming, I believe, to my apartment. He requested me to return into the ante-room, which we did. He spoke to the following effect: 'Miss Hayman, I am very happy in this opportunity of becoming acquainted with you. I sincerely hope you will find everything tolerably comfortable here, and I wish it was in my power to make it more so, but I fear you may have some circumstances of difficulty to contend with. My good Lady Elgin knows and fulfils every wish of my heart relative to your little charge, and I doubt not she has informed

you of everything necessary; on her goodness you may rely, etc. I am afraid you will find the confinement irksome, but it is unavoidable!’ I assured him my only doubts were of my ability to please him. He said he had *no* doubts; that all he heard of me from many people beside those who recommended me, and on whose judgment he had the greatest dependence, made him think himself fortunate in this appointment. He hoped I should not dislike it, but my remaining was optional. . . . He then turned to Lady Elgin and said, ‘It is an additional pleasure to me that Miss Hayman is one of my own countrywomen,’ and, taking both by the hand, said, ‘You are both my countrywomen: my two first titles are Welsh and Scotch.’

“The business part of the interview ended, he talked of more indifferent matters, and took his leave with all that grace and dignity for which he is so remarkable. Never (Miss Hayman continues) had any one such captivating manners. I could have sat down and cried that he is not all that he ought to be—sometimes it is impossible to think his heart is not naturally good.

“The Princess came in to see me (she goes on); she spoke very affably to me, and asked me if I did not see the infant wonderfully like the Prince of Wales, whether I was fond of children, and told me hers was very hot, but very soon pacified, that she had been naughty, but was now, by Lady Elgin’s care, quite good. She stayed about half-an-hour, chose some lace for frocks, and was most kind. The next day, when Lady Elgin came in and said, ‘Miss Hayman must now kiss her royal highness’s hand,’ she got up and said, ‘Oh! we will shake hands,’ and turned the whole formality into a jest; she then began a gossiping conversation on novels, and showed throughout the warmheartedness and kindness, the indiscretion and want of dignity which Lord Malmesbury had noticed in her.”*

Miss Hayman, however, notwithstanding this fair promise, was dismissed at the end of three months, probably, as Lady Rose Weigall suggests, because she was regarded with too much favour by the Princess—and she was then taken into the latter’s service.

The mother was eager to have her engaging child with her, and applied to the Prince for permission, but no notice was taken of the request. She continued her mode of life at Blackheath in great intimacy with such persons as Sir Gilbert Elliot, Lord and Lady Wood, Lord Thurlow, who, strange to say, was

* Lady Rose Weigall, “Memoirs of Princess Charlotte.”

the friend and adviser of both husband and wife, the Duke and Duchess of Hamilton, the Edens and others. Again and again Sir G. Elliot, who saw much of her at this time, declares that her behaviour was everything that was proper. She was utterly undeserving of "such strange neglect." Even her attractions were of some power, "her countenance being remarkably lively and pleasing." "I think her positively a handsome woman." The only blemish he noted was the significant one of an indiscreet and voluble confidence imparted to the first comer. At her little *al fresco* parties she delighted in pouring out the whole of her story to a guest whom she fancied, while the rest looked on.

He says, "Princess Charlotte was in the room till dinner, and is really one of the finest and pleasantest children I ever saw. The Princess of Wales romped with her about the carpet on her knees. Miss Garth said to her, 'You have been so very naughty I don't know what we must do with you.' The little girl answered, crying and quite penitently, 'You must soot me,' meaning shoot her.

"At the Drawing Room, when she and the Prince attended, he did not bow to her, though they were quite close. He declared afterwards that she would not meet his eye. When the King said to her that a new arrival, the Countess d'Almeyda, could not be handsome as she was not fair, the lively Princess curtsied and said she wished others of his Majesty's family were of the same opinion. The good King laughed very heartily, and said he wished so too, and that he thought it a proof of very bad taste."*

Strange to say, she did not give up hope of their differences being arranged, and towards the autumn of 1798 the idea of a reconciliation was broached — on this occasion by the Prince and his friends. As she saw, or fancied she saw, that it was merely for some object of little reference to her, she was determined not to tolerate the suggestion unless the matter was entered on in regular substantial shape. That she was right in this view is shown by the fact that at the very time he was eagerly engaged in pressing Mrs. Fitzherbert to renew their old relations.

When the Princess heard of this she said to a friend and companion of the Prince, that "she hoped *her husband* would not feel *her* any impediment to the reconciliation he was so desirous for." A few days afterwards the same gentleman informed her that he had delivered "the message" to the Prince, who said: "Did she say so? Indeed she is very good-natured;" and the

* Lady Rose Weigall, "Memoirs of Princess Charlotte."

Princess was not long in hearing that she was represented as having taken an active part in the reconciliation referred to, to the great disgust of the Prince, who commented to her informant, a gentleman of his household, on the indelicacy of the proceedings. "Indelicacy, indeed!" she said, "and I wonder who could say such a thing or suppose I could ever have thought it? All I said was, that I hoped I did not stand in the way of his happiness." It was remarked with regret by those who frequented her society that she was apt to prosecute inquiries concerning the movements of the lady in question which it did not become her dignity to know.*

The last time the Prince had been near Mrs. Fitzherbert was the day before the marriage, when he galloped by her house at Marble Hill. The grief and mortification this step had brought her may be conceived; but, by the advice of her friends, she courageously faced the public, and went through the hard ordeal of receiving her friends. All made a point to attend, including the royal Dukes. "Upon this, as upon all other occasions," says Lord Stourton, "she was supported by the Duke of York, with whom, through life, she was always united in the most friendly and confidential relations. Indeed, she frequently assured me, that there was not one of the royal family who had not acted with kindness to her. She particularly instanced the Queen; and, as for George III., from the time she set footing in England till he ceased to reign, had he been her own father, he could not have acted with greater tenderness. That she should have been reconciled to him was but the logical consequence of the original marriage, for she looked on her own as the true one. She did not act on her own responsibility. Her agent was despatched to lay the matter before the Pope. The reply from Rome was favourable to the wishes of the Prince; faithful to her own determination to act as much as possible in the face of the public, she resisted all importunities to meet him clandestinely. The day on which she joined him again at her own house, was the same on which she gave a public breakfast to the whole town of London, and to which he was invited. She told me, she hardly knew how she could summon resolution to pass that severe ordeal, but she thanked God she had the courage to do so. The next eight years were, she said, the happiest of her connection with

* About the time of the Queen's trial it was stated in a mixed company that the Speaker of the House of Commons had condescended to join in a game of romps with her Majesty. One or two past Speakers happened to be present, including Lord Colchester, who seriously repelled the charge. No one, however, thought of the sober Addington, who privately confessed that he had been the delinquent.

the Prince. She used to say that they were extremely poor, but as merry as crickets; and once, on their returning to London, they mustered their common means, and could not raise £5 between them. Upon this, or some such occasion, she related to me, that an old and faithful servant endeavoured to force them to accept £60."

In this singular relation, she now occupied a large house in Park Lane, and, during the season, one in Brighton, which the Prince fitted up for her.

CHAPTER XXIX.

1798.

YET in the Prince's disposition, and united with this undomestic temper, there was a strain of impulsive sympathy that might fairly pass as symptoms of a good heart.

In illustration of this tender feeling, and which he felt pleasure in gratifying when its effect was fresh and no interval had elapsed, may be mentioned his interest in the family of the unfortunate Lord Edward Fitzgerald. This presents him in a pleasing light. The unfortunate nobleman was lying in the Dublin Newgate, suffering from a mortal wound, and treated with extraordinary rigour. The real piteousness of the situation centres in his family, and there is really nothing more heartrending than the picture of the crowd of agitated relatives—including Charles Fox, Lady Louisa Connolly, Lady Sarah Napier, the aged Duchess of Leinster—all pleading, not for grace, but for delay and fair trial; and, above all, for the poor privilege of being allowed to see their kinsman for a few moments. Not until he was within a few hours of his death was this favour granted. The wretched wife—the well-known Pamela—had been hurriedly put on board a packet, with a view of getting to town to throw herself at the King's feet to beg for mercy. Nor were the ministers in London inclined to be harsh.

It was truly pathetic to find his mother, then at a distance from him, "working heaven and earth," as it is called, to obtain mercy. She flew to the Duke of York, who, though he only listened with compassion and made no promise, exerted himself, and succeeded in obtaining from the King that the trial should be delayed.

The Prince's interference, as may be imagined, was not likely to have much weight, considering the feelings of his father

towards him. But to the husband of the agonised mother he addressed the following genuine and feeling letter :

THE PRINCE OF WALES TO WILLIAM OGILVIE, ESQ.

“ Carlton House, June 6, 1798.

“ Three-quarters past 5 P.M.

“ MY DEAR SIR,

“ I feel so truly for the Duchess and the unfortunate Edward, that I am sure there is nothing in the world I would not attempt to mitigate the pangs which I am afraid but too much distress her grace at the present dreadful crisis. I would, were I in the habit of so doing, most undoubtedly write to Lord Clare ; though, even were that the case, I should hesitate as to the propriety of so doing, thinking that such an application to the Chancellor might be subject to misconstruction, and consequently detrimental to Lord Edward’s interests. But I have no hesitation in allowing you to state to his lordship how much pleased I shall be, and how much I am sensible it will conciliate to him the affections of every humane and delicate mind, if every opportunity is given to poor Lord Edward to obtain an impartial trial, by delaying it till his state of health shall be so recruited as to enable him to go through the awful scene with fortitude ;* and until the minds of men have recovered their usual tone, so absolutely necessary for the firm administration of justice.

“ This, my dear Sir, I have no scruple to admit of your stating in confidence, and with my best compliments, to the Lord Chancellor. My long and sincere regard for both the Duchess and Duke of Leinster would have naturally made me wish to exert myself still more, were I not afraid by such exertion I might do more harm than good.

“ Excuse this scrawl, which I pen in the utmost hurry, fearing that you may have left London before this reaches Harley Street. I am, dear sir, with many compliments to the Duchess,

“ Very sincerely yours,

“ GEORGE P.”

For this generous conduct he earned a handsome tribute from Lord Byron :

To be the father of the fatherless,†
To stretch the hand from the throne’s height, and raise
His offspring, who expired in other days,
To make thy sire’s sway by a kingdom less,—

* Moore, “ Life of Lord E. Fitzgerald,” p. 203, edit. 1875.

† He promised to take care of Lord Edward’s child, and later gave him a

This is to be a monarch, and repress
 Envy into unutterable praise.
 Dismiss thy guard, and trust thee to such traits,
 For who would lift a hand, except to bless ?

Were it not easy, Sir, and is't not sweet
 To make thyself beloved ? and to be
 Omnipotent by mercy's means ? for thus
 Thy sovereignty would grow but more complete,—
 A despot thou, and yet thy people free,
 And by the heart, not hand, enslaving us.

Of late the Prince was beginning to affect the airs of a connoisseur. He had a sort of natural feeling for art and things connected with art, and could no doubt discourse of the "correggiosity of Correggio." But his taste was, in truth, uncultivated, and therefore remained always indifferent. We now find him concerned in an artistic matter of a sensational kind. When the "Ireland" imposture was attracting attention the Prince's curiosity was excited, and the papers were brought to him. His remarks and general behaviour are all in character.

"At Mr. Ireland's entrance, his royal highness, with his usual affability, rose to receive him. On the production of the manuscripts, his royal highness began to inspect them with the strictest scrutiny, when, to Mr. Ireland's infinite astonishment, he not only questioned him on every point with an acuteness which he had never before witnessed from the learned who had inspected the papers, but he also displayed a knowledge of antiquity and an intimate acquaintance with documents of the period of Elizabeth, which Mr. Ireland had conceived to be confined to those only that had made this particular subject the object of their study. Having examined the manuscripts, his royal highness said: "As far as the external appearance will witness for the validity of the documents, they certainly bear a strong semblance of age; to decide, however, peremptorily from this cursory inspection, would be unjustifiable, as in matters of this nature so much is to be said *pro* and *con*, that the decision requires mature reflection. I certainly, Mr. Ireland, must compliment you much upon the discovery; as the name of Shakespeare, and everything appertaining to him, is not confined alone to the literary world, but to the English nation, to which the publication will, I trust, afford that gratification which is expected to be derived from it."

commission in his own regiment. He was a young man of spirit, and highly popular as "Mike" Fitzgerald. Colonel Gronow describes him during the occupation of Paris as ever ready to fight the French officers, and placing his card on the chimney-piece in a café, with an offer to meet all comers.

The taste for anything *bizarre*, and the natural wish to be considered a patron of the fine arts, led the Prince to sanction the interesting process of "unrolling papyri," with which view he actually despatched an agent to Italy, who thus reported to him: "About thirty years ago the King of Naples ordered the development, the transcription, and the printing of those volumes which had then been saved. This operation was accordingly begun, and went on till the invasion of Naples by the French. But the mode was slow, being performed by a single person, with only one frame. The frame consists of several taper and oblong pieces of wood, with parallel threads of silk running on each side the whole length of each piece. When the frame is laid on any volume, each piece of wood must be fixed precisely over each line of the page, while the respective threads, being worked beneath each line, and assisted by the corresponding piece of wood above, raise the line upwards, and disclose the characters to view. The operation was, I believe, invented by a Capuchin at Naples. The fruits of it are said to be two publications only—one on music, by Philodemus, who was a contemporary of Cicero; and the other on cookery. The first is in his Majesty's library, at the Queen's palace. Through the obliging politeness of Mr. Barnard, the King's librarian, I have had the advantage of perusing it. I hope your Royal Highness will not disapprove my acknowledging in this place the very warm and respectful interest which both this gentleman and the right honourable the president of the Royal Society have expressed for the furtherance of your Royal Highness's great and good design."

The Prince was encouraged to go on, and he incurred an immense expense to little benefit. Six rolls of manuscripts came to Carlton House; but none of value, except a fragment of Epicurus.

That surprising graciousness of manner—which was indeed more than manner and reached to good nature—was shown in his reception of the young and friendless Irishman, Moore, who wrote home in delight of the condescending Prince and his "fascinating manners." "He said he was happy to know a man of my abilities; and when I thanked him for the honour of being allowed to dedicate 'Anacreon' to him, he replied that the honour was his, in being allowed to put his name to a work of such merit." He added, that he hoped during the winter they would have opportunities of enjoying each other's society. When the poet returned from his disastrous Bermuda expedition, he met the Prince for the first time at a small supper party. There was again something happily gracious in the manner of his welcome. With a judicious tact—for Moore was at the moment

"under a cloud," as it is called, and such recognition would be useful—"I am very glad to see you here again, Moore," he said heartily, "from what I had heard, I was afraid we had lost you. I assure you (laying his hand upon his shoulder) it was a subject of general concern!" The good-natured Prince did not dream how, within a dozen years, the poet was to turn his talents on which he had been complimented against him, and that the most bitter of the long series of lampoons which stung and tortured him for years was to come from that airy and facile pen. Moore was also struck by his genuine passion for music, the Prince being engrossed with his favourite pastimes of music and attending theatricals.

A taste for the best music and the stage was at this period cultivated to a remarkable degree by the nobility. The Duke of Queensberry, Lords Buckingham, Boyle, Hampden, and many others of ton and fashion, were in the habit of giving concerts at their houses, at which the best music was performed. The Duchess of Devonshire united this to her other graces, and Sheridan's well-known song, introduced in "The Stranger," "I have a silent sorrow here," was set to a plaintive melody by her. The well-known taste of the Prince of Wales no doubt encouraged this pleasing accomplishment. The opera was then an exclusively aristocratic pastime. It has since become the delight of the people in general, and rests on a purely commercial support: then it was a costly and exclusive enjoyment. When it was installed at the handsome Pantheon, in the year 1791, under R. O'Reilly, Esq., the list of patrons filling the tiers of boxes was truly imposing; and a little volume was published, containing elaborate plans and references, with a full list of the subscribers, furnished with which any visitor could find his way to any particular *loge*. There the King and Queen, the royal Princes and Dukes regularly attended. The staff was on a handsome scale. For "serious opera," there were six leading singers; for "comic opera," eight. The ballet (or "dancers," as it was styled) consisted of nearly fifty leading "subjects." The orchestra comprised forty performers, with Mr. Cramer as leader of the band, and Mazzinghi as composer and accompanist, a harpsichord being always beside the conductor. It is curious indeed to find here many of the names that now figure at Covent Garden and Her Majesty's Theatres—the Hills, Lavenus, Howards, etc.

The taste for the theatre was stimulated by the patronage of the King, who not only favoured the stage in London but took delight in the little provincial houses at Windsor and Weymouth, where he had always a good-natured speech or nod for such

players as he relished. And it is significant of this interest to find Lord Harcourt thus writing to the admirable Elliston :

“SIR,

“As I understand their Majesties will not leave Windsor before the beginning of next month, I am glad to hear that you are in treaty with Mr. Thornton, as it will be the means of making your talents known to the King and Queen, who, I doubt not, will honour you with their commands. I have apprised them of the probability of your engagement at Windsor, and allow me to say their Majesties are no strangers to the opinion I entertain of your abilities in the art you profess. Don Felix, Charles Surface, Young Wilding, the Jew (in ‘The Jew and Doctor’), and Vapour, are characters which would please their Majesties, and represent you to advantage. Walter, one of your best performances, I do not mention, because I’m sure the King will never again see ‘The Children in the Wood.’ ”

In consequence of this flattering correspondence with his noble patron, Elliston arrived at Windsor, and by command of his Majesty acted on the following night.

It was at Weymouth that a curious little adventure befell this comedian. On the morning of this actor’s benefit, his Majesty had been rambling about the suburbs of the town, when the rain coming on just as he was passing the theatre-door, in he went, and finding no one immediately at hand proceeded at once to the royal box, and seated himself in his own chair.

“The dim daylight of the theatre, and slight fatigue which exercise had occasioned, induced an inclination to drowsiness. His Majesty, in fact, fell into a comfortable doze, which presently became a sound sleep. In the meantime, Lord Townsend, who had encountered Elliston in the neighbourhood, inquired whether he had seen the King, as his Majesty had not been at the palace since his three-o’clock dinner ; and it being then nearly five, the Queen and Princesses were in some little anxiety about him. Elliston, now making his way to the theatre for the purpose of superintending all things necessary for the reception of his august patrons, went straight into the King’s box, and on perceiving a man fast asleep in his Majesty’s chair was about recalling him to his senses in no gentle a manner when, very fortunately, he recognised the King himself. What was to be done ? Elliston hit on the following expedient : taking up a violin from the orchestra he stepped into the pit, and, placing himself just beneath his truly exalted guest, struck up, *dolcemente*, ‘God save the King !’ The expedient had the desired effect ; the royal sleeper was gently loosened from

the spell which had bound him, and, awaking, up he sprang, and, staring the genuflecting comedian full in the face, exclaimed: 'Hey! hey! hey! what, what! Oh yes! I see, Elliston—ha! ha! rain come on—took a seat—took a nap. What's o'clock?'

"Approaching six, your Majesty."

"Six!—six o'clock!" interrupted the King. 'Send to her Majesty—say I'm here. Stay—stay—this wig won't do—eh, eh? Don't keep the people waiting—light up—light up—let 'em in—let 'em in—ha! ha! fast asleep. Play well to-night, Elliston. Great favourite with the Queen. Let 'em in—let 'em in.'

"The house was presently illuminated; messengers were sent off to the royal party, which, in a short lapse of time, reached the theatre. Elliston then quitted the side of his most affable monarch, and, dressing himself in five minutes for his part in the drama, went through his business with bounding spirit; nor was his glee at all diminished when, on attending the royal visitors to their carriage, the King once more nodded his head, saying: 'Fast asleep, eh, Elliston!—fast asleep!'"

It would indeed be hard to give an idea of the extent to which private theatricals were indulged by the nobility; for a time they literally raged, and at every country house and mansion these entertainments formed the favourite pastime. With the aid of "Albina, Countess of Buckinghamshire," a rather eccentric lady of fashion, Colonel Greville, a fop of the first water, founded the "Picnic Society," which gave its performance in Tottenham Court Road, and also at the Pantheon. In the orchestra were found lords and men of fashion performing on the flageolet and double-bass, and the Lady Albina herself presided at the harpsichord. French *proverbs* and English vaudevilles formed the regular performance, while the evening was concluded with a picnic supper, for which the contributions were settled by lot. As a large number drew lots the result was a very handsome banquet, and the quaint uncertainty as to what each was obliged to supply furnishing the diversion. "Some luckless wight," says a friend of the Prince of Wales, one of the performers, "whose beauty was her sole dowry, drew a Périgord pie, value three guineas at least, whilst her rich neighbour drew a pound-cake, value half-a-crown. Then some needy sprig of fashion, a younger brother, drew his lot of misery in a ticket for a dozen of champagne, and a wealthy nabob another for half-a-dozen China oranges."* Mr. Greville figures in Miss Burney's memoirs of her father, and is there sketched with much vivacity. In due course he was utterly ruined by his Picnic Society and other fashionable pursuits, and the

* Angelo, "Reminis.," i. 293.

gay elegant was compelled to accept an appointment in the Isle of France, where, like Brummell and other professors of fashion, he died in exile.

At this place, too, may be noted a curious incident which excited some attention. Gaming had never been one of the Prince's favourite vices, though he indulged in it; but it was a passion with his brother, who, to his death, suffered the most humiliating straits in consequence. For some years before, we have seen the ladies all embarked in such speculating. Mrs. Strutt, Lady Archer, Mrs. Hobart, Lady Elizabeth Luttrell (sister of the Duchess of Cumberland) were avowed bankers—in other words, held gaming-tables.

Another noble person who gave "garden-parties" was conspicuous for the same practice. But at last an information was actually laid against two persons of fashion, Mrs. Archer and Lady Buckinghamshire, who were brought up and fined; and Lord Kenyon, giving judgment in a case of less importance, declared boldly that if any ladies of rank were convicted of this offence before him they should stand in the pillory! A little later the Middlesex magistrates were applied to to license rooms where gaming was to be carried on, and it was urged that this undertaking was patronised by the Prince of Wales. These worthies, rather awe-stricken by this influence, appealed to the judge to take the matter on himself, on which the latter boldly said, there was a rumour that a gaming-house was to be opened under the patronage of a very high and illustrious personage; he trusted, however, the magistrates would do their duty fearlessly and refuse the license.

On this the Prince, with some spirit, wrote to Lord Kenyon the following vindication of himself:

THE PRINCE OF WALES TO LORD KENYON.

"Carlton House, Nov. 15th, 1799.

"MY LORD,

"As I am thoroughly persuaded that in the administration of justice the very last thing that could enter your lordship's thoughts would be by any remark that would fall from your lips to unwarrantably prejudice the public mind against an individual of any description whatever, I am confident that your lordship could never have used *the expression* which in the notion of everyone so decidedly alludes to me, as stated in a morning paper of yesterday, which my Attorney-General has the honor to bear you. It is true that, from applications from many respected quarters, I have been induced to assent to my name being placed

among others as a member of a new Club, to be instituted under the management of a Mr. Martindale, merely for the purpose of social intercourse, of which I never can object to be a promoter, and especially as it was represented to me, that the object of this institution was to enable his trustees to render justice to various honorable and fair claimants. But if these were really your lordship's words (which I cannot for a moment suppose), give me leave to tell you that you have totally mistaken my character and turn, for of all men universally known to have the least predilection to play, I am perhaps the very man in the world who stands the strongest and the most proverbially so upon that point. I shall not trouble your lordship further upon this strange circumstance, as Mr. Graham will convey to you my feelings and sentiments upon it, and I am well persuaded that your own knowledge of the world, as well as the urgency of the case, will suggest to you the propriety of taking such measures in consequence as are requisite and ought to be adopted."

Lord Kenyon answered that he was acting according to what he thought was his duty, and that Mr. Martindale was an improper person to receive a license, "considering what had passed respecting him judicially. I can only add that I am confident that I meant nothing offensive to you. They know little of my sentiments who conceive me capable of using language tending to expose the higher orders of the state to censure or light observations. May I presume to hope that your royal highness will pardon this trouble?"

Turning from these dilettante pursuits, and disappointed in his aims at political office, the Prince of Wales was presently filled with what was called "martial ardour, and a longing to take part in the general preparations for the defence of the country." It was in 1798 that the enthusiasm for volunteering and enrolment in patriotic corps became universal. Everyone was armed and belonged to some corps; even the Speaker of the House of Commons and the Prime Minister took service and were seen practising their drill. "My study," the former writes, "exhibits a curious scene: the journals are diversified by helmets and sabres; and a book of military tactics is now lying upon my table in close contact with the orders of the day."

"We can remember," says Mr. Croker, "that the fine figure and consequential air of the Speaker emerging from the wig and gown in a gay cavalry uniform was one of the amusing topics of the day." Indeed the "martial ardour" at this time was so hot and furious that the strange spectacle was presented of the Prime

Minister resorting to the *duello* in vindication of his measures for the defence of the country. This quarrel arose out of his comment on the behaviour of Mr. Tierney, of whom he said, indignantly, that "no man could oppose it in the manner Mr. Tierney had done unless it were from a wish to impede the defence of the country." On which he was challenged by the offended gentleman. As everything connected with this business was to be singular, almost the Premier's first act was to send for the Speaker (!), who found him making his will. Whitsunday was the day fixed for the encounter, and the representative of the House of Commons attended him to the ground. "I went," says the latter, "with him and Ryder down the Birdcage Walk, up the steps into Queen Street, where their chaise waited to take them to Wimbledon Common. Unable to rest, I then mounted my horse and rode that way. When I arrived on the hill, I knew, from seeing a crowd looking down into the valley, that the duel was then proceeding. After a time I saw the same chaise which had conveyed Pitt to the spot mounting the ascent, and riding up to it, I found him safe, when he said, 'You must dine with me to-day.' Someone afterwards observed, 'The Speaker knew of the meeting, and ought to have prevented it;' but Lord Chatham remarked that I could not have taken any step so injurious to his family; in fact, as I had received the information from Pitt himself, my interfering would have looked too much like collusion."

For so decorous and righteous a man as Mr. Addington, this seems a strange proceeding. It is a remarkable fact that four most conspicuous men, who all filled the office of Prime Minister, should, during a short period of about thirty years, have condescended to expose their lives in this fashion. Mr. Fox fought Mr. Adam; Mr. Pitt, as we have seen, Mr. Tierney; Mr. Canning, Lord Castlereagh; and, finally, the Duke of Wellington, Lord Winchelsea. Two, viz. Pitt and the Duke, were actually holding the office of Prime Minister at the time. This seems an almost incredible state of things; yet three of these encounters might be within the memory of some now living.

The volunteer enthusiasm seized on the nation, and we find our impulsive Prince wearing his uniform, making glowing and warlike speeches to the men, and reviewing his regiment, the well-known 10th. Finally, he was so filled with ardour that he applied for leave to go on active service. Bonaparte and his armies were supposed to be about invading England, and to his father he now addressed the following appeal:

THE PRINCE OF WALES TO THE KING.

“Carlton House, April 25th, 1798.

“SIR,

“I have, from various considerations of duty and respect, delayed to the latest hour obtruding myself by a direct application to your Majesty; and it is now with an earnestness that I never before ventured to approach you, sir, that I presume to throw myself at your feet, and to implore your gracious attention to the humble sentiments I offer in this letter.

“The serious and awful crisis in which this country now stands calls for the united efforts of every British arm in the defence of all that can be dear to Englishmen; and it is with glowing pride that I behold the prevalence of this sentiment through every part of your Majesty’s kingdom.

“Whatever may some time back have been your Majesty’s objections to my being in the way of actual service, yet at a crisis like this, unexampled in our history, when every subject in the realm is eagerly seeking for and has his post assigned him, those objections will, I humbly trust, yield to the pressure of the times, and your Majesty will be graciously pleased to call me forth to a station wherein I may prove myself worthy of the confidence of my country, and of the high rank I hold in it, by staking my life in its defence; death would be preferable to being marked as the *only man* that was not suffered to come forth on such an occasion.

“Should it be my fate to fall in so glorious a contest, no injury could arise to the line of succession, on account of the number happily remaining of your Majesty’s children. At the same time, were there fifty princes, or were I the single one, it would, in my humble judgment, be equally incumbent on them, or me, to stand foremost in the ranks of danger at so decisive a period as the present.

“I am the more induced to confide that your Majesty’s goodness will comply with this humble petition, from the conviction I feel, that, had similar circumstances prevailed in the reign of the late King, when your Majesty was Prince of Wales, you would have panted, sir, for the opportunity I now so earnestly covet. I know your Majesty, and am fixed in this belief; and I should hold myself unworthy of my descent and station if a tamer impulse could now possess me; still more to justify this confidence, allow me to recall to your Majesty’s recollection the expressions you were graciously pleased to use when I solicited foreign service upon my first coming into the army. They were, sir, that your Majesty did not then see the

opportunity for it ; but that if anything was to arise at home, I ought to be one of the *first* and *foremost*.

“ My character with the nation, my honour, my future fame and prospects in life, are now all at stake. I therefore supplicate your Majesty to afford me those means for their preservation which affection for my country and devotion to my sovereign would have prompted me to solicit, even though my birth and station had not rendered it my duty to claim them. I presume in no respect to prescribe to your Majesty the mode of being employed ; what I humbly, but most earnestly, solicit is the certainty of active service, in such a character as to your Majesty shall seem fit.

“ With the profoundest humility, I have the honour to subscribe myself, your Majesty’s most dutiful and most affectionate Son and Subject,

“ GEORGE P.”

The “ should I fall ” must have produced a grim smile on the lips of the King, whose fixed opinion was that there was but one of his family deficient in personal courage. His answer was a blunt refusal, on the ground “ that military command was incompatible with the situation of the Prince of Wales.”

CHAPTER XXX.

1801.

WE have now arrived at the curious incident which obliged Mr. Pitt to retire from office and brought into prominence the feeble Addington and his family party—the “clan” of relations, Hiley, Bragge Bathurst, and Vansittart, without due provision for whom his services could never be obtained. Never, indeed, were the claims of family connection carried so far, or political interest made so subservient to the ties of kindred. Mr. Croker, who interspersed his spirited, though often truculent, articles with reminiscences of curious facts gathered from the important men with whom he had associated, tells us how Mr. Bragge, “the Premier’s brother-in-law, then in his first Parliament, was raised to the Privy Councillor’s office of Treasurer of the Navy. His brother, Mr. Hiley Addington, was Secretary of the Treasury. His schoolfellow and intimate, Mr. Bond, just come into Parliament, was a Lord of the Treasury. So afterwards was his cousin, Mr. Golding, who does not seem to have been in Parliament at all. Mr. Adams, another brother-in-law, was a Lord of the Admiralty. These were all respectable gentlemen, whose abilities were equal to their positions—and we do not know that they at all exceeded the proportion of private friends that every first minister used, and perhaps ought to have, in his administration—but they were as yet little known, and their connection with the Premier was easily misrepresented as being their sole merit. This, with Addington’s own inferiority to the great masters of debate amongst whom he stood, gave ample scope to the satiric pleasantries of Canning,* a strophe of one whose

* “The pleasantries of Canning, though nowhere alluded to in these volumes, and only now lingering in a few failing memories, had so much

sallies, caricaturing the style of the Doctor's oratory and the class of its admirers, had no small effect in its day, and still clings to the memory :

“ Cheer him when he hobbles vilely,
 Brother Bragge and Brother Hiley !
 Cheer him when his audience flag,
 Brother Hiley—Brother Bragge !

“ Brother Bragge, however, was a well-informed and judicious man, who spoke with considerable weight ; and we have heard that, in his earlier day, Brother Hiley was remarkably lively and clever ; and he certainly was, in our time, a sensible as well as amiable gentleman.”

The wit of Canning would have been more exercised had he known that “ Brother Hiley ” later indulged in a romantic tenderness for the fascinating Miss Stephens, which he seemed to have even confided to Mr. Jerdan, through whose good offices his admiring strains were inserted in a popular journal.

The retirement of Pitt was owing, as is well known, to the measure for the relief of the Catholics, the irresponsible question which was to overset or impede so many ministries. It is remarkable that the Prince had signified to Mr. Pitt his approbation of the measure, and indeed avowed, on several occasions, that he was favourable to it. And this, of course, was to be accounted for, as Lord Moira, his present friend, was an ardent “ Catholic.”*

influence in Addington's defeat, that we think it worth while to preserve two or three specimens of this kind of small shot. In allusion to those specious orations with which Addington used to captivate the country gentlemen, Canning quoted, ‘ I do remember an apothecary . . . culling of simples ! ’ On another occasion, when Addington was loftily enumerating his various measures of national defence, Canning interjected, loud enough to be heard, ‘ Oh, most forcible Feeble ! ’ ‘ The relative merits of Pitt and Addington,’ he said, ‘ might be determined by the Rule of Three Inverse :

“ ‘ Pitt is to Addington—
 As London is to Paddington ! ’

And we have half forgotten a French epitaph which concluded :

“ ————— Cy gît
 Ministre par hasard et Médecin malgré lui.”

Mr. Pitt himself would in private indulge a smile at his successor's somewhat prosy orations. We heard very lately from one of the company still happily surviving, that about this time Pitt, who was expected to a dinner-party, did not come in till the second course, ‘ begging pardon for being so late, as he was obliged to hear Addington out ; and the Doctor, you know, travels with his own horses ! ’”

* Rose, “ Diaries,” i. 302.

But at this moment he was more than usually reckless in associating with the Jacobins and the Opposition, uttering the most violent speeches ; * the Duke of York, however, remained firm to the King. A strange surprise, however, was at hand, which was once more to raise his hopes. Unfortunately the agitation commenced with the late change, and the struggles he had gone through were now to have their effect on the King. Agitated and distracted by different forms of excitement, his life attempted in the theatre, the behaviour of his son and daughter-in-law, and above all, shocked at the proposals of his minister to concede what with him was a matter of morbid horror—indulgence to the Catholics—it had not been a surprise to anyone that the mind of the King should have for the third time given way.

About the middle of February he caught cold ; the old “hurries” set in, and within a fortnight the fatal Willis had arrived on the scene, and he was “as bad as ever.” From his ravings it was easy to learn what had caused his disorder, for he was heard to mutter frequently, “I will be true to the Church.”

Never was there such an awkward *contretemps*, for the arrangements were only in progress : Mr. Pitt had not gone out, or rather Mr. Addington had not come in. All was confusion. But the hopes of the Prince and his friends were raised, and once more the regency became the existing topic. It is amusing to find that the Prince, bearing in mind a wholesome recollection of his encounter with Mr. Pitt on the last occasion, took the first opportunity to make eager approaches to him. On the 23rd February he sent for him to ask his advice, which the minister—for he was still such *de facto*—firmly and significantly said he would be glad to give, but on this condition : “that he would not be advised by his friends of the Opposition.” The Prince agreed at once, only stipulating that he might occasionally consult his friend Lord Moira.†

Pitt added a further stipulation, that if unhappily there should be a necessity for a regency, his royal highness should acquiesce in the arrangement as settled in 1789 ; “that the Prince seemed to be struck at that being put to him so distinctly, and perhaps a little averse to the unqualified tones used (as if Mr. Pitt was conscious of his manner of stating his determination having been severe), and that his royal highness asked how some of those now acting with Mr. Pitt would feel on the subject who had taken a very different line on the former occasion ; to which Mr. Pitt replied he thought every one concerned in it,

* Malmesbury, “Diaries,” iv. 6.

† Rose, “Diaries,” i. 311.

without excepting his royal highness, could not do better than accord with what was most evidently the clear sense of the legislature, expressed so as not to be mistaken. The Prince then expressed uneasiness at some of the restrictions as likely to be found extremely inconvenient. Nothing, however, passed conclusive between them as to any arrangement of an administration. The interview ended with the Prince saying that he must take time to consider all that Mr. Pitt had said; his whole demeanour perfectly decorous and proper, as well with Mr. Pitt as at the Queen's House, when he was there. Mr. Fox has certainly not been with his royal highness, and Mr. Pitt thinks he has not seen Mr. Sheridan."

There was a second interview a few days later. Both parties were inclined to put aside any burning question of principle, and arrange the matter by a sort of compromise. Pitt (Mr. Abbott says), at one of the interviews, advised the Prince to carry out the Addington arrangement, which had been in train; to which the Prince consented. Neither did the Prince consult any of the Opposition, but with his usual lack of propriety he appeared at a concert given by the notorious Lady Hamilton, and was heard to say to Calonne, the ex-minister, "*Savez vous, M. Calonne, mon père est aussi fou que jamais?*" At Carlton House dancing and singing were going on.

As the Prince found Mr. Pitt on the whole rather stiff—indeed, he said "that no good came of it," as Lord Malmesbury repeats, "it was natural that the Prince's next step was to see what he could do with Addington." Accordingly, "Jack Payne" was despatched for him. The Prince asked him bluntly, "Was he or Mr. Pitt minister?" He said that Mr. Pitt was. "In that case, pray send Mr. Pitt to me." The other naturally hesitated, and said something about consulting the Duke of York, on which the Prince, with a certain readiness or smartness which never deserted him, replied, "No advice can be wanting on such an occasion, Mr. Addington: if you decline acceding to my request, be so good as to obey my commands."*

Another account says the Prince declared that he would look to Mr. Addington if necessary.† The Prince, it may be said, had no authority to give commands to Mr. Addington, and could only "request." Among other topics, he dwelt on the improper signing of a paper by the King, which he had been made to do by one of his physicians at the instigation of the Chancellor, a matter on which the Prince was eager to have Mr. Addington's opinion; but the latter was reserved and begged to

* Lord Malmesbury, "Diaries."

† Lord Colchester, "Diaries," i. 249.

be excused. The Prince was gracious, and praised his general behaviour.*

All, however, seemed anxious that the Prince should "keep himself quiet" and be "passive." But this he could not do. He was remarked to be in great agitation of mind and spirits, uttering complaints of the way he was treated at the palace, how he was furnished with no news of the King, and talked "Opposition language." His brother, the Duke of York, was remarkable for his devotion to the royal family, and seemed to be worn out with his affectionate attendance. The Duke of Cumberland, exhibiting his natural contending disposition on this, as on other occasions, was going about uttering sentiments of great violence, declaring that the Chancellor who had procured the King's signature deserved a hatchet. This Prince was busy at his favourite labour of embroiling people, for on one of the last days of February, when the King's life was despaired of, he sent at once for the Duke of York but not for the Prince of Wales. The latter protested against such treatment, on which he gave the excuse that the Prince was not acceptable to the King. By March the 7th the King had recovered after about a three-weeks' illness, so that once more the Prince had been beguiled into following a will-o'-the-wisp. The first admitted was his favourite son, the Duke of York, and at the interview it is remarkable that while questions were eagerly put as to all his family, there was no allusion to his eldest son.†

Not until March the 11th—four days later—did the Prince see his father. The Court party malignantly gave out that this was his own fault, that he had purposely chosen to come at times when he knew he would not be admitted, etc. We know enough of the feelings of the Queen and her faction to see that this exclusion was part of their policy. Payne, describing this interview to Mr. Rose, declared that the Prince had not been with him more than a minute or two before Doctor Thomas Willis came into the room without having been sent for, and remained in it the whole time his royal highness was there, which of course prevented any confidential conversation; but that much passed of a general nature.

* In Dean Pellew's "Life of Lord Sidmouth," Lord Malmesbury's story of the Prince's rebuke is dismissed as untrue; yet, in the very account of the interview given by Addington to Mr. Abbott, we find that, "Mr. Addington explained that, not having received his royal highness's commands to go before, he had voluntarily forborne to call, as it must appear to be courting a situation; but that being now commanded to go," etc. From this apology, it is evident that something of the kind had taken place.

† Malmesbury, "Diaries," p. 31.

Among other matters entered upon by his Majesty, he said he was glad to find the inquiries made about his health had been very general. The Prince answered, he believed everybody had been to the Queen's house who could either go there or be carried; to which the King replied, Mr. Fox had not been, but that Mr. Sheridan had, who he verily thought had a respect and regard for him; particularly dwelling on his conduct at Drury Lane Theatre, when the attempt was made on his Majesty's life by the madman who had been in the Dragoons; which led his Majesty to ask whether the Prince was in the house at the time; who said he was not, but that he repaired there the moment he heard of the transaction.*

It would seem that the Prince was misinformed as to Fox's inquiries at the palace. Fox left his name only on that evening. Thus he seemed destined to turn everything to his own disadvantage, and set himself in a worse light than ever in his father's eyes. One matter, however, arose out of the crisis which comes in aid of his consistency later, when we come to deal with his "desertion of the Whigs," and the charge of his retaining his father's advisers; for he had now declared to Lord St. Helens, who repeated it to Mr. Abbott, that his purpose had been "to maintain his father's ministers in their situation."† The Opposition, too, had not been very eager for place; for Fox and the rest expressed themselves glad and relieved at the crisis being over. The Prince was therefore the only one mortified and discredited.

But there soon came evidences of a relapse in the King's condition, and at the Drawing Room held on March the 26th it was noted how pale the Queen was, and the Princesses seemed as if they had been weeping. The Prince of Wales, Lord Malmesbury states, behaved rudely to the Queen. His adviser, Lord Thurlow, who was talked of for Chancellor in case the party had come in, was reported to have used shocking language about the King, so that Lord Kenyon, who heard him, declared that of the two he was the one who was really mad.

The Prince, however, found it advisable to be on good terms with the Court, as he was now, as ever, in want of money. He wished to make an arrangement for borrowing a sum of money from the King, on the security of extending for a year more the present plan for paying off his debts. On one day in April he and the King rode down to Kew together, and after dinner rode again. This, or the discussion during the exercise, brought on agitation, and he was heard putting questions to workpeople and

* Rose, "Diaries," i. 332.

† Colchester, "Diaries," i. 262.

others. On these rides the Prince founded an extraordinary legend, for he sent for the Chancellor, Lord Eldon, on the following day, and announced to him that his Majesty was about to retire to Hanover or to America, and resign the government to him! He wished the Chancellor, therefore, to take the necessary steps, and see Lord Thurlow for the purpose. The Queen and his brothers wished him to confine the King, etc. The Chancellor received this extraordinary communication very coolly and bluntly, and declined to adopt any of the measures suggested. He then pressed Lord Rosslyn, the late Chancellor, with similar proposals, sending him earnest messages by Payne. This in itself seemed like madness. Yet his forecast came true.

In a few weeks the poor King had relapsed. Dr. Willis riding out with him, he would tell his physician that he had a "most charming night: no sleep from eleven till half after four," the time being passed in getting out of bed, opening the shutters, in praying at times violently, and in making such remarks as betrayed a consciousness of his own situation. He frequently called out: "I am now perfectly well, and my Queen, my Queen has saved me!"*

In fact, his body, mind, and tongue were all upon the stretch every minute, and his eldest son and his eldest son's affairs were unfortunately too much connected with this agitation. Good and conscientious king as he was, he had now before his mind the trouble of his little grandchild's future, which he felt he alone was competent to decide on, and had determined to take the charge of her himself.

That there was scarcely a more wretched household in the kingdom than that at Kew will be seen from the following piteous letter:

THE PRINCESS ELIZABETH TO THE REV. DR. THOMAS WILLIS.

"June 6th, 1801.

"After receiving one note you will be surprised at this: but second thoughts are sometimes best: besides which I am commanded by the Queen to inform you by letter how much this subject of the Princess is still in the King's mind, to a degree that is distressing, from the unfortunate situation of the family; Mama is of opinion that the Lord Chancellor should be informed of it. The Queen commands me to add, that if you could see her heart, you would see that she is guided by every principle of justice, and with a most fervent wish that the dear

* "Life of Lord Eldon," i. 376.

King may do nothing to form a breach between him and the Prince,—for she really lives in dread of it; for, from the moment my Brother comes into the room till the instant he quits it, there is nothing that is not kind that the King does not do by him. This is so different to his manner when *well*, and his ideas concerning the child so extraordinary, that, to own to you the truth, I am not astonished at Mama's uneasiness. She took courage and told the King, that now my Brother was quiet, he had better leave him so, as he never had forbid the Princess seeing the child when she pleased; to which he answered, 'That does not signify; the Princess shall have her child, and I will speak to Mr. Wyatt about the building of the wing to her present house.' You know full well how speedily every thing is *now ordered* and done. In short, what Mama wishes is, that you would inform the Lord Chancellor that his assistance is much wanted in preventing the King doing any thing that shall hurt him. The Princess spoke to me on the conversation the King had had with her, expressed her distress, and I told her how right she was in not answering, as I feared the King's intentions, though most kindly meant, might serve to hurt and injure her in the world. I hope I was not wrong, but I am always afraid when she speaks to me on such unfortunate subjects. I think the King heated and fatigued, which I am not surprised at, not having been one minute quiet the whole day. I assure you it is a very great trial, the anxiety we must go through; but we trust in God,—therefore we hope for the best.

"Your friend,

"ELIZABETH."

THE PRINCESS ELIZABETH, PROBABLY TO THE REV. DR. THOMAS WILLIS.

"June 9th, 1801.

"I am but just come into my room, where I found your very comfortable letter, which I return you many thanks for. I had promised Mama to tell you, etc.

* * * * *

"She commands me to say to you that she wishes the Lord Chancellor would show Mr. Addington, that, as the King is contented with it, that he had better not hurry our going, as he is so much better, that there is hope that in gaining strength it will ensure us from having a relapse, which you may easily believe is her earnest and daily prayer. He has been very quiet, very heavy, and very sleepy, all the evening, and has said two or three times, yesterday was too much for him. God grant that his eyes

may soon open, and that he may see his real and true friends in their true colours. How it grieves one to see so fine a character clouded by complaint ! but He who inflicted it may dispel it, so I hope all will soon be well.

“ Your friend,
“ ELIZABETH.”

A change of scene, fresh country air, with perfect quiet, was absolutely necessary, and the King, who delighted in staying at a favourite subject's house for a few days, honoured Mr. Rose with a visit at Cufnells. Gradually he was restored to health, for a time at least.

It was when he was at Weymouth that the military taste of the kingdom was enlisted by the behaviour of the First Consul : drilling, volunteering, addresses going forward with great animation. Mr. Addington, now established as Prime Minister, was being pressed by the Duke of York and his brother for military employment, the former proposing to go down and urge the matter on the King. Once more the Prince of Wales's military ardour flamed up, and he addressed the ministers in the following strain :

THE PRINCE OF WALES TO MR. ADDINGTON.

“ Brighton, August 3rd, 1801.

“ DEAR SIR,

“ In the present anxious pressure of public affairs I am extremely unwilling to obtrude the smallest additional weight of business upon you, and more especially to intrude any which could belong personally to myself. But the station you fill renders it necessary that all such communications as I have to state should be made directly to you. Besides, the zeal which I am conscious animates you in the cause of all the royal family, together with the kind and obliging interest I believe you so particularly to take in whatever essentially relates to myself, induce me to communicate with you in thorough confidence, and under the impression of high personal opinion and esteem.

“ As I wish to make you perfectly master of the subject I am about to treat I enclose you a copy of a letter* which I wrote to the King in April, 1798, when the alarm of invasion was universal, although very wide of the formidable aspect which this measure unquestionably wears at the present day. I cannot immediately put my hand on the answer his Majesty wrote me to this letter (it being among my papers in London), but it went distinctly to this, that, in case of the enemy's landing, my regiment was to be

* *Ante*, p. 326.

foremost of the cavalry, and myself at their head. The feelings I have expressed to the King in this letter, as possessing me at that day, be assured have lived in my breast ever since, and operate at this moment with a tenfold increase; yet, dreading even the apprehension of offering any proposition that might tend, however slightly, to flurry the King, I have determined not to repeat a similar mode of application to his Majesty on the present occasion; but, confiding in your friendly discretion, place these uppermost wishes of my heart entirely in your hands, requesting that you will take the earliest convenient opportunity of bringing this subject before his Majesty as a suggestion from yourself, not only founded upon the infinite anxiety you know it to excite in my mind, but from the high rank I bear in the country, as a measure of national expectation at so eventful a crisis as the present, and in its consequences materially affecting my future character and consequence in life in the estimation of the world. I again submit, as before, to be called out in whatever character his Majesty shall think fit. I own that a command of cavalry would be most pleasing to me, because I think in that line I could best serve my King and country; but I have no difficulties. I am willing and ready to serve in any command and with any rank a letter of service may assign me; or even to serve under the command of any officer whatever it may be his Majesty's pleasure to place over me. Independent of an ardent love for actual service, the consideration of my fame and character with the world engrosses, as you may readily conceive, my every thought, and will, I make no doubt, insure to me your good offices and cordial co-operation in the attainment of an object I have so earnestly at heart; for I can with the utmost sincerity conclude this letter with assuring you of the truth of the declaration I made in my letter to the King, 'that death would be preferable to the being marked as the only man that was not suffered to stand forth on such an occasion.'

"I am, dear Sir, ever very sincerely yours,

"GEORGE P."

A month was allowed to elapse before an answer was returned to this appeal. It was of the conventional kind. The King, it seems, declared there was no situation suited to the rank of the Prince. "The conversation," the minister adds significantly, "from causes which it is unnecessary for me to state, was unavoidably short; but he should have thought himself justified in attempting to protract it."

Peace, however, was presently concluded, due notice of which the minister gave to the Prince.

THE PRINCE OF WALES TO MR. ADDINGTON.

"Windsor Castle, Oct. 2nd, 1801.

"Many thanks, my dear sir, for your obliging communication. It is a matter of amazing importance, and upon which I most heartily congratulate you. Everything, I have no doubt, will smile upon us now. . . . As I am this moment summoned to his Majesty's dinner, excuse my not adding anything more, except that I am, with the truest regard, dear Sir,

"Ever most sincerely yours,

"GEORGE P."

Indeed, so soon as Otto, the French plenipotentiary, arrived in London, we find the Prince, with a kind of emotional view of the event, taking an interest in the negotiations, and closeted with the envoy. Sir John Macpherson, one of his favourites, was engaged in the matter. "We all knew and appreciate thoroughly," wrote Otto to the latter, "the talents of the Prince, who so ably expounded to us the true system that should guide the relations of his country as well as of all Europe. Peace, founded on such consideration, becomes not a simple exchange of snuff-boxes or a ten years' truce, but a solemn pact, guaranteed by all that humanity holds most dear. 'All is new in this age of ours,' said the Prince. All is indeed new, and so, too, was the language he used, and which will never be effaced from my recollection."* We can see the figure of the Prince as he thus expatiated at Carlton House, and fancied he was controverting events. Otto's letter was shown to the Prince by Macpherson, and the former, much gratified, forwarded it to the Prime Minister :

THE PRINCE OF WALES TO MR. ADDINGTON.

"Jan. 22nd, 1802.

"When the letter of M. Otto, which I have now the pleasure to inclose to you, was communicated to me, I desired Admiral Payne to lay it before you: he called twice in Downing Street, but missed you. It is neither from the compliments that M. Otto has been pleased to pay me, nor even from the justice which he renders to your administration, that I am anxious to draw your attention to the contents of his letter. It is the wisdom, the temper, and the pleasing harmony of the political order which it embraces, that have won my admiration. Fortunate shall I reckon my own destiny in life, if I can in any

* Lord Sidmouth, "Life," ii. 25.

way be useful to favour a political system of such extensive good. I know what you will naturally feel on the subject; and no one can wish you more success in the arduous and noble duty you are discharging for your country.

“GEORGE P.”

The minister of course gratefully acknowledged these compliments. On the conclusion of the peace in 1802, festivities and revels of all kinds followed. The Lord Mayor gave a magnificent entertainment, which the Prince attended, whose horses were taken off at Temple Bar, and his carriage drawn by the mob to the Mansion House. A ball given by the gaming Club in Bond Street followed.

We are told how their rooms were decorated upon the most magnificent scale. “The windows, by excellent mechanical skill, served as so many entrances, and were ornamented with flowers; gilt *corbeilles* depended from them, containing lights. The great room was illuminated with about forty lustres; and it was covered with a green and buff treillage paper. Each recess formed a greenhouse, which was stocked with the choicest plants, trees of considerable size, beauty, and value. A grand orchestra contained a full band of musicians; and a number of Indians performed their war-dance, battle, and song. The Prince of Wales was habited in a rich Highland dress, and he had a room exclusively for his own party. An adjoining one represented a subterraneous cave for a number of banditti. These sung several excellent comic songs, for the amusement of his royal highness. The banditti consisted of Lord Craven, the Hon. Berkeley Craven, Mr. Manners, and Mr. T. Sheridan. The greater part of the foreign ministers were present, and also several strangers of distinction, among whom was the beautiful Madame Recamier. This was one of the most splendid fêtes ever given in this country.”

He was now indeed beginning to exhibit that curious taste for costume and fancy dressing for which he was to be so remarkable. At the Lord Mayor’s he had worn “a general’s frock uniform,” which, considering that he did not hold the rank, seems strange.

At one of these balls a difficulty had arisen out of the position that two important ladies, the Duchess of York and Mrs. Fitzherbert, were to take. The King and Queen would not hear of them being placed at the same table, and the Duke was distracted between his father and brother. It was arranged by having separate tables. Here the Prince’s rude speech to “Old

Baggs" (Lord Eldon) caused much amusement. The latter was pressing on him the necessity of consulting the dignity and comfort of the Princess of Wales, when the Prince declared roughly, "That he was not the sort of person to let his hair grow under his wig to please his wife." The Chancellor answered him firmly: "Your Royal Highness condescends to be personal. I beg leave to retire." The Prince wrote to him to say that nothing was intended, that he had quoted a proverb; but it was awkward that the practice alluded to was one in which the Chancellor indulged!

During this year the Prince seems to have been more than usually restless, and some eccentric *boutades* of his are recorded. He seriously proposed to one of the ministers to go abroad "and form a Northern Confederacy." His plan was to gain the Duke of Brunswick, which he said he could do, and through him Russia and Prussia. In this he was to be assisted by one Baron Hompesch, "a rank adventurer." He pressed the matter on Lord Pelham, who only put it aside as one of the ten thousand chimeras his royal highness had conceived. The following day Hompesch was despatched by him to Lord Pelham to talk the plan over, but the latter declined entering on such a subject with the baron.*

* Malmesbury, "Diaries," iv. 263.

CHAPTER XXXI.

1802—1803.

THE Prince's affairs had now for some five or six years been submitted to strict regulation, and, it having been made illegal by Act of Parliament to trust him, it was presumed that he was secured against all relapse into debt. The public was now to be surprised by learning that it was the father, and not the son, that was in debt; and an application was made to Parliament to discharge the arrears of the Civil List, amounting to nearly a million sterling. Lord Holland was bold enough to suggest that his Majesty should be treated as his son had been, and a portion of the royal income set apart. It is but fair to state that this deficit was attributed to public charges—secret service money and, strange to say, outlay upon elections. This was a favourable opening, and accordingly the old wearying subject of the Prince's situation was brought forward, and Mr. Manners Sutton, the Solicitor-General, once more made an appeal for the Duchy of Cornwall arrears. This long-disputed claim was now in the Court of Chancery, where it had remained without decision for some years. The old arguments were put forward, and it was shown that the King had not only appropriated the arrears, but taken fines from tenants for long leases, leaving the Prince's powers as a landlord much impaired. The motion for a committee was defeated by a not very large majority—160 to 103. The minister was beginning to feel the weakness of the position, and in December, 1802, sent to consult Mr. Pitt as to making a compromise with the Prince on the terms of discharging him from the arrangement of 1795, by paying off whatever debts remained due. In return, the Prince was not to press for the

Cornwall arrears. Mr. Pitt declared himself against all compromise. If the arrears were justly owing, he said, they should be paid; if not, the question of increased allowance should be considered separately. On February 16th, Mr. Addington came to the House with a message from his Majesty, to this effect:*

The minister dwelt on the necessity of the position of splendour a Prince of Wales ought to hold, and proposed that a sum of money, not exceeding £60,000 in the year, should be granted for three years from January 5th, 1803. This was not to affect the previous arrangement of 1795.† In the succeeding debates it came out that the legal proceedings for the arrears had been suddenly stopped, so that this step had the air of a compromise. It was also announced that no less a sum than £575,000 of debt had been paid off by the commissioners. Mr. Sheridan made himself conspicuous by his devotion to his master's interest, declaring that the Prince considered himself bound in honour to pay his creditors the ten per cent. which the commissioners had deducted, and that until he was quite clear he would decline to reassume his state and position. Lord Malmesbury seems to have truly interpreted the meaning of these protestations, viz. that the Prince had incurred a new tale of debt in the teeth of the Act of Parliament. And, indeed, it is evident that there would have been found persons ready to advance an heir-apparent money as he required, on usurious terms, in spite of any Act.‡

Mr. Fox boasted in extravagant terms that the Prince had now shown himself worthy of the management of a large income by his prudence—the only virtue he was ever charged with wanting. Mr. Erskine declared for him, that now, at forty years of age, he did not owe one shilling to the public. Mr. Tierney said he was the least expensive Prince of Wales that ever existed! However, on February 28th, the Prince's equerry, Colonel Tyrwhitt, brought down a message to the House, stating that

* Dean Pellew's mode of appreciating his hero may be conceived from the following passage: "Speaking of this event" (the execution of the unfortunate Governor Wall), Lord Sidmouth observed: "In the case of Governor Wall, Lord Eldon said he would not say he ought to be hanged and he would not say he ought not. He was hanged," added Lord Sidmouth, in that calm tone which marked the mild decision of his character.—"Life," i. 478.

† In 1801, Mr. Addington had sanctioned an increased allowance of £8000 a year to the Prince. It becomes difficult to follow the changes in the arrangements: the Prince, however, was the gainer.

‡ The Chancellor, however, explained that there virtually had been no reduction, as they were given the full sum in debentures at three per cent. or the reduced sum with five per cent., no interest being due on mere book debts.

the Prince gratefully accepted the promised Act, declaring that there were still claims on him for which he must set apart a portion of his income. Mr. Calcraft on March 4th brought forward a motion in this spirit, for a committee to examine the Prince's affairs, and enable him to resume his position with proper state and dignity. All his friends declared that the Prince had not directed this motion, though he did not prevent it, and Sheridan made a humorous and effective speech.

The ministers carried the previous question by a small majority of about 40. In the House of Lords, however, Lord Moira brought the matter to a conclusion, by a sort of official acceptance on the Prince's part. The Prince also declared, by the mouth of Mr. Erskine, his chancellor, that he could not think of adding further to the burden of the country, and that he was perfectly satisfied with what Parliament had done.* For, as Lord Malmesbury learned from Lord Pelham, "it is understood the Prince is to restore his establishment." He asked, "Was this put in writing?" He answered: "No; but it was implied by the Prince's promise." In short, it is clear that the whole is a compromise between the Prince and Addington, to induce the Prince to waive his claims on the arrears of the Duchy, and which the Crown lawyers consider to be a fair one, and so withdraw his petition of right. No terms are made with the Prince but this (Lord Pelham was one of the Government, it must be borne in mind): "None of his income (which will now be net which is paid him by the public) is appropriated to any specific purpose, as the Civil List is; and the whole will evidently be squandered away, without his assuming any one single extensive work of royalty or splendour, to prove that he and his hangers-on do not consider it a farce."†

The reader will recall Mr. Addington consulting with Mr. Pitt on the compromise. Yet we now find him denying it. The Prince also denied it, and abruptly stopped his suit, which was ripe for decision. The affair, however, was arranged; the public were not to learn more of the matter for a long period.

The peace, one which "every one was glad of and no one proud of," soon ended in a violent rupture, and once more the

* It is characteristic that, while the Prince's friends were thus clamouring in his behalf, their principal should have arranged matters with the minister; to whom Mr. Sutton had written apologetically, that the Prince did not wish to embarrass the Government or reflect upon any one, but merely to satisfy the public that he had not been a burden on the country, and that the state of accounts should be in his favour.—"Life of Lord Sidmouth," i. 493.

† "Diaries," iv. 205.

kingdom re-echoed with valorous shouts and the noise of preparation. Once more, too, was our Prince fired with martial ardour, and put forward his claim to be allowed to serve his country as a soldier. He addressed Mr. Addington in a number of letters.

THE PRINCE OF WALES TO MR. ADDINGTON.

“Carlton House, July 18th, 1803.

“SIR,

“The subject on which I address you presses so heavily on my mind, and daily acquires such additional importance, that, notwithstanding my wish to avoid any interference with the disposition made by his Majesty’s ministers, I find it impossible to withhold or delay an explicit statement of my feelings, to which I would direct your most serious consideration.

“When it was officially communicated to Parliament that the avowed object of the enemy was a descent on our kingdoms, the question became so obvious that the circumstances of the times required the voluntary tender of personal services; when Parliament, in consequence of this representation, agreed to extraordinary measures for the defence of these realms alone, it was evident the danger was not believed dubious nor remote. Animated by the same spirit which pervaded the nation at large, conscious of the duties which I owed to his Majesty and the country, I seized the earliest opportunity to express my desire of undertaking the responsibility of a military command; I neither did nor do presume on supposed talents as entitling me to such an appointment. I am aware I do not possess the experience of actual warfare; at the same time I cannot regard myself as totally unqualified, nor deficient in military science, since I have long made the service my particular study. My chief pretensions were founded on a sense of those advantages which my example might produce to the State, by exciting the loyal energies of the nation, and a knowledge of those expectations which the public had a right to form as to the personal exertion of their princes at a moment like the present. The more elevated my situation, in so much the efforts of zeal became necessarily greater; and I confess, that if duty has not been so paramount, a reflection on the splendid achievements of my predecessors would have excited in me the spirit of emulation. When, however, in addition to such recollections, the nature of the contest in which we are about to engage was impressed on my consideration, I should indeed have been devoid of every virtuous sentiment if I felt no reluctance in remaining a passive spectator of armaments which have for their object the very existence of the British empire.

"Thus was I influenced to make my offer of service, and I did hope that his Majesty's ministers would have attached to it more value. But when I find that, from some unknown cause, my appointment seems to remain so long undetermined; when I feel myself exposed to the obloquy of being regarded by the country of passing my time indifferent to the events which menace, and insensible to the call of patriotism, much more of glory, it then becomes me to examine my rights, and to remind his Majesty's ministers that the claim which I have advanced is strictly constitutional, and justified by precedent; and that in the present situation of Europe, to deny my exercising it is fatal to my own immediate honour and the future interests of the crown.

"I can never forget that I have solemn obligations imposed on me by my birth, and that I should ever show myself foremost in contributing to the preservation of the country. The time is arrived when I may prove myself sensible of the duties of my situation, and of evincing my devotion to that sovereign, who by nature as well as public worth commands my most affectionate attachment.

"I repeat that I should be sorry to embarrass the Government at any time, most particularly at such a crisis; but since no event in my future life can compensate me for the misfortune of not participating in the honours and dangers that await the brave men destined to oppose an invading enemy, I cannot forego the earnest renewal of my application.

"All I solicit is a more ostensible situation than that in which I am at present placed; for, situated as I am—a mere colonel of a regiment—the major-general commanding the brigade, of which such regiment must form a part, would justly expect and receive the full credit of prearrangement and successful enterprise.

"I am, Sir, very sincerely yours,

"G. P."

THE PRINCE OF WALES TO MR. ADDINGTON.

"July 26th, 1803.

"A week has now elapsed since the Prince of Wales transmitted to Mr. Addington a letter on a subject of the highest importance. Though he cannot anticipate a refusal to so reasonable a demand, he must still express some surprise that a communication of such a nature should have remained so long unanswered.

"When the Prince of Wales desired to be placed in a situation which might enable him to show the people of England an

example of zeal, fidelity, and devotion to his sovereign, he naturally thought that he was only fulfilling his appropriate duty as the first subject of the realm, in which, as it has pleased Providence to cause him to be born, so he is determined to maintain himself, by all those honourable exertions which the exigencies of these critical times peculiarly demand. The motives of his conduct cannot be misconceived nor misrepresented; he has, at a moment when everything is at stake that is dear and sacred to him and to the nation, asked to be advanced in military rank, because he may have his birthright to fight for, the throne of his father to defend, the glory of the people of England to uphold, which is dearer to him than life, which has yet remained unsullied under the princes of the house of Brunswick, and which, he trusts, will be transmitted pure and unsullied to the latest generations. Animated by such sentiments, he has naturally desired to be placed in a situation where he can act according to the feelings of his heart and the dictates of his conscience.

“In making the offer, in again repeating it, the Prince of Wales considers that he has only performed his duty to himself, to the State, to the King, and to Europe, whose fate may be involved in the issue of this contest. If this tender of his services is rejected, he shall ever lament that all his efforts have been fruitless, and that he has been deprived of making those exertions which the circumstances of the empire, his own inclinations, and his early and long attention to military affairs, would have rendered so peculiarly grateful to himself, and, he trusts, not entirely useless to the public.”

Mr. Addington explained that though a verbal answer had been sent he could now declare that the King “applauded” the Prince’s spirit, but referred him to the answers given before.

The Prince of Wales then desired Mr. Addington to lay his note of the 26th of July before the King.

MR. ADDINGTON TO THE PRINCE OF WALES.

“Downing Street, August 1, 1803.

“SIR,

“In obedience to the commands of your Royal Highness, I laid before his Majesty the letter dated the 26th of July, with which your Royal Highness honoured me; and I have it in command from his Majesty to acquaint your Royal Highness, that the King had referred Mr. Addington to the orders he had before given him, with the addition, that the King’s opinion being fixed

he desired that no further mention should be made to him upon the subject.

"I have the honour to be, with every sentiment of respect and deference, Sir, your Royal Highness's most humble Servant,

"HENRY ADDINGTON."

THE PRINCE OF WALES TO THE KING.

"Brighthelmstone, Aug. 6, 1803.

"SIR,

"A correspondence has taken place between Mr. Addington and myself on a subject which deeply involves my honour and character. The answers which I have received from that gentleman, the communication which he has made to the House of Commons, leave me no hope but an appeal to the justice of your Majesty. I make that appeal with confidence, because I feel that you are my natural advocate, and with the sanguine hope that the ears of an affectionate father may still be opened to the applications of a dutiful son.

"I ask to be allowed to display the best energies of my character; to shed the last drop of my blood in support of your Majesty's person, crown, and dignity; for this is not a war for empire, glory, or dominion, but for existence. In this contest, the lowest and humblest of your Majesty's subjects have been called on; it would therefore little become me, who am the first, and who stand at the very footstool of the throne, to remain a tame, an idle, and a lifeless spectator of the mischiefs which threaten us, unconscious of the dangers which surround us, and indifferent to the consequences which may follow. Hanover is lost—England is menaced with invasion—Ireland is in rebellion—Europe is at the foot of France. At such a moment the Prince of Wales, yielding to none of your servants in zeal and devotion—to none of your subjects in duty—to none of your children in tenderness and affection—presumes to approach you, and again to repeat those offers which he has already made through your Majesty's minister. A feeling of honest ambition, a sense of what I owe to myself and to my family—and, above all, the fear of sinking in the estimation of that gallant army, which may be the support of your Majesty's crown and my best hope hereafter, command me to persevere, and to assure your Majesty with all humility and respect, that, conscious of the justice of my claim, no human power can ever induce me to relinquish it.

"Allow me to say, Sir, that I am bound to adopt this line of conduct by every motive dear to me as a man, and sacred to me as a Prince. Ought I not to come forward in a moment of

unexampled difficulty and danger? Ought I not to share in the glory of the victory when I have everything to lose by defeat? The highest places in your Majesty's service are filled by the younger branches of the Royal family: to me alone no place is assigned. I am not thought worthy to be the junior major-general of your army. If I could submit in silence to such indignities, I should indeed deserve such treatment, and prove to the satisfaction of your enemies, and my own, that I am entirely incapable of those exertions which my birth and the circumstances of the times peculiarly call for. Standing so near the throne, when I am debased, the cause of royalty is wounded; I cannot sink in the public opinion without the participation of your Majesty in my degradation. Therefore every motive of private feeling and of public duty induces me to implore your Majesty to review your decision, and to place me in that situation which my birth, the duties of my station, the example of my predecessors, and the expectations of the people of England entitle me to claim.

"Should I be disappointed in the hope which I have formed, should this last appeal to the justice of my sovereign, and to the affection of my father, fail of success, I shall lament in silent submission his determination; but Europe, the world, and posterity, must judge between us.

"I have done my duty; my conscience acquits me; my reason tells me that I was perfectly justified in the request which I have made, because no reasonable arguments have ever been adduced in answer to my pretensions. The precedents in our history are in my favour; but if they were not, the times in which we live, and especially the exigencies of the present moment, require us to become an example to our posterity.

"No other cause of refusal has or can be assigned, except that it is the will of your Majesty. To that will and pleasure I bow with every degree of humility and resignation; but I can never cease to complain of the severity which has been exercised against me, and the injustice I have suffered, till I have ceased to exist.

"I have the honour to subscribe myself, with all possible devotion, your Majesty's most dutiful and affectionate Son and Subject,

"G. P."

THE KING TO THE PRINCE OF WALES.

"Windsor, August 7, 1803.

"MY DEAR SON,

"Though I applaud your zeal and spirit, of which, I trust, no one can suppose any of my family wanting, yet, con-

sidering the repeated declarations I have made of my determination on your former applications to the same purpose, I had flattered myself to have heard no further on the subject.

"Should the implacable enemy so far succeed as to land, you will have an opportunity of shewing your zeal at the head of your regiment; it will be the duty of every man to stand forward on such an occasion, and I shall certainly think it mine to set an example, in defence of every thing that is dear to me, and to my people.

"I ever remain, my dear Son, your most affectionate Father,
"GEORGE R."

THE PRINCE OF WALES TO THE KING.

"Brighthelmstone, August 23, 1803.

"SIR,

"I have delayed thus long an answer to the letter which your Majesty did me the honour to write, from the wish to refer to a former correspondence which took place between us in the year 1798. Those letters were mislaid, and some days elapsed before I could discover them. They have since been found. Allow me then, Sir, to recall to your recollection the expressions you were then graciously pleased to use, and which I once before took the liberty of reminding you of, when I solicited foreign service, upon my first entering into the army. They were, Sir, that your Majesty did not then see the opportunity for it, but if anything was to arise at home, 'I ought to be first and foremost.' There cannot be a stronger expression in the English language, or one more consonant to the feelings which animate my heart. In this I agree most perfectly with your Majesty—'I ought to be first and foremost.' It is the place which my birth assigns me—which Europe—which the English nation—expect me to fill—and which the former assurances of your Majesty might naturally have led me to hope I should occupy. After such a declaration I could hardly expect to be told that my place was at the head of a regiment of dragoons.

"I understand from your Majesty, that it is your intention, Sir, in pursuance of that noble example which you have shewn during the course of your reign, to place yourself at the head of the people of England. My next brother, the Duke of York, commands the army; the younger branches of my family are either generals or lieutenant-generals; and I, who am Prince of Wales, am to remain colonel of dragoons. There is something so humiliating in the contrast that those who are at a distance would either doubt the reality, or suppose that to be my fault which is only my misfortune.

"Who could imagine that I, who am the oldest colonel in the service, had asked for the rank of a general officer in the army of the King, my father, and that it had been refused me?

"I am sorry, much more than sorry, to be obliged to break in upon your leisure, and to trespass thus, a second time, on the attention of your Majesty; but I have, Sir, an interest in my character more valuable to me than the throne, and dearer, far dearer, to me than life. I am called upon by that interest to persevere, and pledge myself never to desist, till I receive that satisfaction which the justice of my claim leads me to expect.

"In these unhappy times, the world, Sir, examines the conduct of princes with a jealous, a scrutinizing, a malignant eye. No man is more aware than I am of the existence of such a disposition, and no man is therefore more determined to place himself above all suspicion.

"In desiring to be placed in a forward situation, I have performed one duty to the people of England; I must now perform another, and humbly supplicate your Majesty to assign those reasons which have induced you to refuse a request which appears to me and to the world so reasonable and so rational.

"I must again repeat my concern, that I am obliged to continue a correspondence which, I fear, is not so grateful to your Majesty as I could wish. I have examined my own heart—I am convinced of the justice of my cause—of the purity of my motives. Reason and honour forbid me to yield: where no reason is alleged I am justified in the conclusion that none can be given.

"In this candid exposition of the feelings which have agitated and depressed my wounded mind, I hope no expressions have escaped me which can be construed to mean the slightest disrespect to your Majesty. I most solemnly disavow any such intention; but the circumstances of the times—the danger of invasion, the appeal which has been made to all your subjects, oblige me to recollect what I owe to my own honour and to my own character, to state to your Majesty, with plainness, truth, and candour, but with all the submission of a subject and the duty of an affectionate son, the injuries under which I labour, and which it is in the power of your Majesty alone at one moment to redress.

"It is with sentiments of the profoundest veneration and respect that I have the honour to subscribe myself,

"Your Majesty's most dutiful and most affectionate

"Son and Subject,

"G. P."

Up to this point we have the Prince addressing these official protests assisted by his political friends. But now we shall find him adopting his own characteristic style in continuing this singular controversy with his "dear brother" of York. This interchange of ideas had something ludicrous.

THE PRINCE OF WALES TO THE DUKE OF YORK.

"Brighton, October 2, 1803.

"MY DEAR BROTHER,

"By last night's Gazette, which I have this moment received, I perceive that an extensive promotion has taken place in the army, wherein my pretensions are not noticed; a circumstance which, whatever may have happened on other occasions, it is impossible for me to pass by, at this momentous crisis, without observation.

"My standing in the army, according to the most ordinary routine of promotion, had it been followed up, would have placed me either at the bottom of the list of generals, or at the head of the list of lieutenant-generals. When the junior branches of my family are promoted to the highest military situations, my birth, according to the distinctions usually conferred on it, should have placed me first on that list.

"I hope you know me too well to imagine that idle, inactive rank is in my view; much less is the direction and patronage of the military departments an object which suits my place in the State or my inclinations; but in a moment when the danger of the country is thought by Government so urgent as to call forth the energy of every arm in its defence, I cannot but feel myself degraded, both as a Prince and a soldier, if I am not allowed to take a forward and distinguished part in the defence of that empire and crown, of the glory, prosperity, and even existence of that people, in all which mine is the greatest stake.

"To be told I may display this zeal solely and simply at the head of my regiment is a degrading mockery.

"If that be the only situation allotted me, I shall certainly do my duty, as others will; but the considerations to which I have already alluded entitle me to expect, and bind me every way to require, a situation more correspondent to the dignity of my own character, and to the public expectation. It is for the sake of tendering my services in a way more formal and official than I have before pursued, that I address this to you, my dear brother, as the Commander-in-chief, by whose counsels the Constitution presumes that the military department is administered.

“If those who have the honour to advise his Majesty on this occasion shall deem my pretensions, among those of all the royal family, to be the only one fit to be rejected and disdained, I may at least hope, as a debt of justice and honour, to have it explained that I am laid by in virtue of that judgment, and not in consequence of any omission or want of energy on my part.

“Etc. etc. etc.

“G. P. W.”

The Duke of York replied to his “dearest brother,” regretting “the impossibility there is, upon the present occasion, of my executing your wishes of laying the representation contained in your letter before his Majesty. Suffer me, my dearest brother, as the only answer that I can properly give you, to recall to your memory what passed upon the same subject soon after his Majesty was graciously pleased to place me at the head of the army; and I have no doubt that, with your usual candour, you will yourself see the absolute necessity of my declining it.” He then explained that “in the year 1795, upon a general promotion taking place, at your instance I delivered a letter from you to his Majesty, urging your pretensions to promotion in the army; to which his Majesty was pleased to answer, that, before ever he had appointed you to the command of the 10th Light Dragoons, he had caused it to be fully explained to you what his sentiments were with respect to a Prince of Wales entering into the army, and the public grounds upon which he could never admit of your considering it as a profession, or of your being promoted in the service. And his Majesty, at the same time, added his positive commands and injunctions to me, never to mention this subject again to him, and to decline being the bearer of any application of the same nature, should it be proposed to me; which message I was, of course, under the necessity of delivering to you, and have constantly made it the rule of my conduct ever since; and, indeed, I have ever considered it as one of the greatest proofs of affection and consideration towards me, on the part of his Majesty, that he never allowed me to become a party in this business. Having thus stated to you, fairly and candidly, what has passed, I must trust you will see that there can be no ground for the apprehension expressed in the latter part of your letter, that any slur can attach to your character as an officer, particularly as I recollect your mentioning to me yourself, on the day on which you received the notification of your appointment to the 10th Light Dragoons, the explanation and condition attached to it by his Majesty.”

THE PRINCE OF WALES TO THE DUKE OF YORK.

"Brighton, Oct. 9, 1803.

"MY DEAR BROTHER,

"I have taken two days to consider the contents of your letter of the 6th instant, in order to be as accurate as possible in my answer, which must account to you for its being longer, perhaps, than I intended or I could have wished.

"I confide entirely in the personal kindness and affection expressed in your letter; and am, for that reason, the more unwilling to trouble you again on a painful subject, in which you are not free to act as your inclination, I am sure, would lead you. But as it is not at all improbable that every part of this transaction may be publicly canvassed hereafter, it is of the utmost importance to my honour, without which I can have no happiness, that my conduct in it shall be fairly represented and correctly understood. When I made a tender of my services to his Majesty's ministers, it was with a just and natural expectation that my offer would have been accepted in the way in which alone it could have been most beneficial to my country, or creditable to myself; or, if that failed, that at least (in justice to me) the reasons for a refusal would have been distinctly stated; so that the nation might be satisfied that nothing had been omitted on my part, and enabled to judge of the validity of the reasons assigned for such a refusal. In the first instance, I was referred to his Majesty's will and pleasure, and now I am informed by your letter that, before 'he had appointed me to the command of the 10th Light Dragoons, he had caused it to be fully explained to me what his sentiments were with respect to a Prince of Wales entering into the army.'

"It is impossible, my dear brother, that I should know all that passed between the King and you; but I perfectly recollect the statement you made of the conversation you had with his Majesty, and which strictly corresponds with that in your letter now before me. But I must, at the same time, recall to your memory my positive denial, at that time, of any condition or stipulation having been made upon my first coming into the army; and I am in possession of full and complete documents, which prove that no terms whatever were then proposed, at least to me, whatever might have been the intention: and the communications which I have found it necessary subsequently to make have ever disclaimed the existence of such a compromise at any period, as nothing could be more averse to my nature, or more remote from my mind.

“As to the conversation you quote in 1796 (when the King was pleased to appoint me to succeed Sir William Pitt), I have not the most slight recollection of its having taken place between us. My dear brother, if your date is right, you must be mistaken in your exact terms, or at least in the conclusion you draw from it; for, in the intimacy and familiarity of private conversation, it is not at all unlikely that I should have remembered the communication you made me the year before; but that I should have acquiesced in, or referred to, a compromise which I never made, is utterly impossible.

“Neither in his Majesty’s letter to me, nor in the correspondence with Mr. Addington (of which you may not be fully informed), is there one word, or the most distant allusion to the condition stated in your letter; and even if I had accepted the command of a regiment on such terms, my acquiescence could only have relation to the ordinary situation of the country, and not to a case so completely out of all contemplation at that time, as the probable or projected invasion of this kingdom by a foreign force sufficient to bring its safety into question. When the King is pleased to tell me, ‘that, should the enemy land, he shall think it his duty to set an example in defence of the country’—that is, to expose the only life which, for the public welfare ought not to be hazarded—I respect and admire the principles which dictate that resolution; and as my heart glows with the same sentiments, I wish to partake in the same danger—that is, with dignity and effect. Whenever his Majesty appears as King, he acts and commands; you are Commander-in-chief; others of my family are high in military stations; and even by the last brevet, a considerable number of junior officers are put over me. In all these arrangements, the Prince of Wales alone, whose interest in the event yields to none but that of the King, is disregarded, omitted—his services rejected: so that, in fact, he has no post or station whatsoever in a contest on which the fate of the crown and the kingdom may depend.

“I do not, my dear brother, wonder that, in the hurry of your present occupation, these considerations should have been overlooked. They are now in your view, and, I think, cannot fail to make a due impression.

“As to the rest, with every degree of esteem possible for your judgment of what is due to a soldier’s honour, I must be the guardian of mine to the utmost of my power.

“Etc. etc.,

“G. P.”

The Duke of York replied :

‘Horse Guards, Oct. 11, 1803.

“MY DEAR BROTHER,

“I have this moment, upon my arrival in town, found your letter, and lose no time in answering that part of it which appears to me highly necessary should be clearly understood. Indeed, my dear brother, you must give me leave to repeat to you, that, upon the fullest consideration, I perfectly recollect your having yourself told me at Carlton House, in the year 1793, on the day on which you were informed of his Majesty’s having acquiesced in your request of being appointed to the command of the 10th Regiment of Light Dragoons, the message and condition which was delivered to you from his Majesty. And I have the fullest reason to know that there are others to whom, at that time, you mentioned the same circumstance; nor have I the least recollection of your having denied it to me, when I delivered to you the King’s answer; and I conceive that your mentioning in your letter my having stated a conversation to have passed between us in 1798, must have arisen from some apprehension, as I do not find that year ever adverted to in my letter.

“I have thought it due to us both, my dear brother, thus fully to reply to those parts of your letter in which you appear to have mistaken mine; but as I am totally unacquainted with the correspondence which has taken place upon this subject, I must decline entering any further into it.”

THE PRINCE OF WALES TO THE DUKE OF YORK.

“Brighton, Oct. 22, 1803.

“MY DEAR BROTHER,

“By my replying to your letter of the 6th instant, which contained no sort of answer to mine of the 2nd, we have fallen into a very frivolous altercation upon a topic which is quite foreign to the present purpose. Indeed, the whole importance of it lies in a seeming contradiction in the statement of a fact, which is unpleasant even upon the idlest occasion.

“I meant to assert, that no previous condition to forego all pretensions to ulterior rank, under any circumstances, had been imposed upon me, or even submitted to me, in any shape whatsoever, on my first coming into the service; and with as much confidence as can be used in maintaining a negative, I repeat that assertion.

“When I first became acquainted with his Majesty’s purpose to withhold from me further advancement, it is impossible to recollect; but that it was so early as the year 1793, I do not

remember, and, if your expressions were less positive, I should add, nor believe; but I certainly knew it, as you well knew, in 1795, and possibly before. We were then engaged in war, therefore I could not think of resigning my regiment, if under other circumstances I had been disposed to do so; but, in truth, my rank in the nation made military rank, in ordinary times, a matter of little consequence, except to my own private feelings. This sentiment I conveyed to you in my letter of the 2d, saying expressly that mere idle, inactive rank was in no sort my object; but upon the prospect of an emergency, when the King was to take the field, and the spirit of every Briton was roused to exertion, the place which I occupy in the nation made it indispensable to demand a post correspondent to that place, and to the public expectation. This sentiment I have the happiness to be assured, in a letter on this occasion, made a strong impression upon the mind, and commanded the respect and admiration, of one very high in Government.

“The only purpose of this letter, my dear brother, is to explain, since that is necessary, that my former ones meant not to give you the trouble of interceding as my advocate for mere rank in the army. Urging further my other more important claims upon Government, would be vainly addressed to any person, who can really think that a former refusal of mere rank, under circumstances so widely different, or the most express waiving of such pretensions, if that had been the case, furnishes the slightest colour for the answer I have received to the tenders I have now made of my services.

“Your department, my dear brother, was meant, if I must repeat it, simply as a channel to convey that tender to Government, and to obtain either their attention to it, or their avowed refusal, etc.

“G. P.”

THE DUKE OF YORK TO THE PRINCE OF WALES.

“Horse Guards, October 13, 1803.

“DEAR BROTHER,

“I have received your letter this morning, and am sorry to find that you think that I have misconceived the meaning of your first letter, the whole tenor of which, and the military promotion which gave rise to it, led me naturally to suppose your desire was, that I should apply to his Majesty, in my official capacity, to give you military rank, to which might be attached the idea of subsequent command.

“That I found myself under the necessity of declining, in obedience to his Majesty’s pointed orders, as I explained to

you in my letter of the 16th instant. But from your letter of to-day, I am to understand that your object is not military rank, but that a post should be allotted to you, upon the present emergency, suitable to your situation in the state. This I conceive to be purely a political consideration, and as such totally out of my department; and as I have most carefully avoided, at all times, and under all circumstances, ever interfering in any political points, I must hope that you will not call upon me to deviate from the principles by which I have been invariably governed.

"Believe me, my dear Brother,

"Your most affectionate Brother,

"FREDERICK."

THE PRINCE OF WALES TO THE DUKE OF YORK.

"Carlton House, October 14, 1803.

"MY DEAR BROTHER,

"It cannot but be painful to me to be reduced to the necessity of further explanation on the subject which it was my earnest wish to have closed, and which was of so clear and distinct a nature, as, in my humble judgment, to have precluded the possibility of either doubt or misunderstanding.

"Surely there must some strange fatality obscure my language in statement, or leave me somewhat deficient in the powers of explanation, when it can lead your mind, my dear brother, to such a palpable misconstruction (for far be it from me to fancy it wilful) of my meaning, as to suppose, for a moment, I had unconnected my object with efficient military rank, and transferred it entirely to the view of a political station, when you venture to tell me 'my object is not military rank, but that a post should be allotted to me, upon the present emergency, suitable to my situation in the state.' Upon what ground you can hazard such an assertion, or upon what principles you can draw such an inference, I am utterly at a loss to determine; for I defy the skilful logician, in torturing the English language, to apply with fairness such a construction of any word or phrase of mine, contained in any one of the letters I have ever written on this, to me, most interesting subject. I call upon you to reperuse the correspondence. In my letter of the 2d instant, I told you unequivocally that I hoped you knew me too well to imagine that idle, inactive rank was in my view; and that sentiment, I beg you carefully to observe, I have in no instance whatever, for one single moment, relinquished or departed from.

"Giving, as I did, all the considerations of my heart to the

delicacy and difficulties of your situation, nothing could have been more repugnant to my thoughts, or to my disposition, than to have imposed upon you, my dear brother, either in your capacity as commander-in-chief, or in the near relationship which subsists between us, the task, much less the expectation, of causing you to risk any displeasure from his Majesty, by disobeying in any degree his commands, although they were even to militate against myself. But, with the impulse of my feelings towards you, and quickly conceiving what friendship and affection may be capable of, I did not, I own, think it entirely impossible, that you might, considering the magnitude and importance which the object carries with it, have officially advanced my wishes, as a matter of propriety, to military rank and subsequent command, through his Majesty's ministers, for that direct purpose; especially when the honour of my character and my future fame in life were so deeply involved in the consideration: for I must here again emphatically repeat, that idle, inactive rank was never in my view; and that military rank, with its consequent command, was never out of it.

"Feeling how useless, as well as ungracious, controversy is, upon every occasion, and feeling how fatally it operates upon human friendship, I must trust that our correspondence on this subject shall cease here; for nothing could be more distressing to me, than to prolong a topic, on which it is now clear to me, my dear brother, that you and I can never agree, etc. etc.

"G. P."

While this odd controversy was going on between the brothers, serious news of invasion reached the Prime Minister, who sent off a despatch to the Prince.

MR. ADDINGTON TO THE PRINCE OF WALES.

"Richmond Park, Oct. 23, 1803.

"SIR,

"In consequence of some intelligence which has reached me, I am impelled by a sense of duty to your Royal Highness, and to the public, to express an earnest and anxious hope, that you may be induced to postpone your return to Brighton until I shall have had an opportunity of making further inquiries, and of stating the results of them to your Royal Highness.

"I have the honour to be, with the utmost deference and respect, Sir, your Royal Highness's most faithful and most humble Servant,

"HENRY ADDINGTON."

The Prince at once availed himself of the opening this communication offered, and replied :

THE PRINCE OF WALES TO MR. ADDINGTON.

“ Carlton House, Oct. 24, 1803.

“ SIR,

“ By your grounding your letter to me upon intelligence which has just reached you, I apprehend that you allude to information which leads you to expect some immediate attempt from the enemy. My wish to accommodate myself to anything which you represent as material to the public service would of course make me desirous to comply with your request; but if there be any reason to imagine that invasion will take place directly, I am bound by the King’s precise order, and by that honest zeal, which if not allowed any fitter sphere for its action, to hasten instantly to my regiment. If I learn that my construction of the word ‘intelligence’ be right, I must deem it necessary to repair to Brighton immediately, etc. etc.

“ G. P.”

The first letters to Addington were supposed to have been written by Sheridan, but one, Mr. Moore states, was the work of Sir R. Wilson, the second of Lord Hutchinson.* It has been stated, however, in *The Morning Chronicle*, that they were written by Mr. Fonblanque, who was then in the Prince’s confidence.† On the other hand, in one of Sir Philip Francis’s letters he alludes to his claim of having written letters for the Princes; and his family always maintained that he was the author of these offers of military service.

The correspondence between the brothers shows that the Duke had chosen his line, and cast his lot with the King. But there was only a coolness between them, and the affection between the Prince and his brother continued to the last.

Unfortunately, this refusal inflamed the Prince still more against the King. He showed the correspondence to everyone, and uttered the most violent complaints of the treatment he had met with. In the House of Commons the matter was taken up, and on December 2nd direct allusions were made to the proscription of the Prince, the matter becoming so delicate that strangers were excluded. The question arose on a motion of Colonel Crawford as to the defences of the country, and became of an exciting kind, owing to the episode being prolonged till nearly three in the morning—then unusual. A report of what

* “ Life of Sheridan,” ii. 317.

† Huish, i. 444.

took place, however, got into the newspapers, where we find Colonel Tyrwhitt indiscreetly disclosing what had passed with the King.

From this communication we learn that Colonel Tyrwhitt said: "I esteem it my duty, sir, here to declare (deprecating any imputation that might be thrown upon a character of such value to us all to preserve unshaded), that if the services of the illustrious personage alluded to have been rejected, I have proof that the fault does not lie at his door." "Several members, and in particular Mr. Fox, having, upon this, pressed ministers to give an explanation of their reasons for refusing the services of the heir-apparent, the Chancellor of the Exchequer rose, and, it is said, spoke nearly as follows: 'No man is more ready to bear attestation to feelings so worthy of the rank and character of the illustrious personage alluded to than I am. Having made this declaration, I must here pause, and declare that nothing short of the commands of the King, and the united authority of this House, shall in future ever compel me to say one word more upon the subject.'"

Mr. Calcraft observed, that "the Prince of Wales had been a colonel in the army from the year 1782. His brother was a field-marshal and commander-in-chief. Three younger brothers were lieutenant-generals. And you leave the heir-apparent to the monarchy to fight for that crown which he is one day to wear, as the colonel of a regiment, under the command of a major-general, his own equerry."

A few days later, public curiosity, thus irresistibly stimulated, was further gratified by the correspondence being published. It appeared in *The Morning Chronicle* of December 7th, Lords Thurlow and Hutchinson, with Mr. Francis, who were then his guides and directors, having advised the proceedings. Its effect on the King was extraordinary, and gave the last touch to the hateful and degrading picture he had conceived of his son. He looked on it as an affront—as it were, something unbecoming and ungentelemanly. Often afterwards he would allude to this crowning insult on the part of his son—that "he had published his letters."

The Prince consoled himself by making martial addresses; and on one occasion harangued a corps of volunteers to this effect: "Volunteers,—It is with the highest satisfaction I take upon me the honourable office of presenting the Royal Spelthorn Legion this day with their colours. When I view so respectable a corps, and consider the high character attached to it, it would be superfluous in me to point out those duties and obligations which have been so fully exemplified in its conduct.

When you behold these colours," taking them in his hand, "they will remind you of the common cause in which you are engaged for your King, your country, your religion, your laws, liberty, and property, your children and your wives—nay, in short, for everything dear to Englishmen! Accept, then, this pledge, this sacred pledge, which you will take care to defend with your last drop of blood, and only resign with your lives!"*

After the declaration of war in 1803, Fox was living in retirement, when some views of the Prince were communicated to him through Mr. Adair. It will be amusing to peruse them, and see that Fox only considered them worth notice from a sort of good-natured toleration. By this time he had found there could be no union between him and a person directed by Moiras and Sheridans.

Mr. Fox wrote in answer: "I can only say that if the P. of W. wants to see me it will of course be my duty to wait upon him, either in London, or wherever else he chooses to appoint: but that as to attending Parliament at present, it appears to me impossible that any good can come of it. It is, as the P. very properly says, respecting the war, both too soon and too late; too soon for anything like a junction and strength, and too late for opposing the Defence Bill, etc. At the same time you may tell H.R.H. that I am very happy to find that my general opinions are nearly the same as his. To add the conscripts to the regulars would be far the best plan, but whether his mode of raising recruits be at all right, even for the purpose which I best like of a regular army, is another question. If the conduct of ministers respecting Hanover be as blameable as H.R.H. supposes (and I have little doubt but he is right), a motion of inquiry may certainly be made on that subject; and indeed this is the only thing like a parliamentary measure that can be now taken.

"The part of the P.'s opinions in which I most heartily concur is that which relates to the propriety he thinks there would have been in waiting for some cause of war in which other nations would have concurred. Now as to men, you know I have no objection to any set, and to some of those mentioned I have something like partiality; but you know the strong impressions which many of my friends entertain against Windham, and everything of the name of Grenville. That these prejudices must, if there is occasion, be resisted, I am most ready to admit;

* His brother, the "sailor prince," on a similar occasion, was brief and to the point. "My friends and neighbours, wherever duty calls us I will go with you, fight in your ranks, and never return without you." This, it must be said, had more of the true ring than the Prince's elaborate periods.

but until there seems some opportunity of doing good, there is no use in doing violence to the feelings of friends. Lord Spencer's influence with the K. I suspect to exist only in the P.'s imagination, nor do I conceive that any influence can turn him against a ministry made in a manner so agreeable to him. What, then, is to be done? Alas! I know not; but I think the best chance is to wait for the effect which these violent measures and outward events will produce, and then if much discontent should arise, a junction, such as the P. seems to wish, may be produced, and the exertion of H.R.H.'s influence may very much contribute to give strength—ay, and cordiality too—to such a junction.

“One thing, however, it may be necessary to premise, viz.: that I cannot be one of any party who do not see the possibility and the eligibility of being at peace with Bonaparte upon certain conditions. The only question with me at all doubtful is, whether in the expectation of the propriety of such a junction as has been hinted at, hereafter, it might not be advisable soon to have some concert provisionally, if I may so express myself, between the P. and some at least of the Grenvilles, Lord Spencer, etc., in order that our respective modes of conduct might be such as at least not to create new difficulties, if not to facilitate a union next session. One good consequence of such an understanding might be to put a stop to Moira's rhodomontades, and other things of the kind. I am sensible all this is a proceeding far too slow for the Prince's impetuosity, an impetuosity which upon this occasion, however, is much to his credit. If he and those most immediately connected with him can suggest any plan of more rapid operation, I am sure I have no unwillingness to listen to it with all imaginable deference. In the meantime pray say everything from me to H.R.H. that is respectable and affectionate, and if I might venture one piece of advice, it would be to take great care not to say or do anything that can tend to declare a personal enmity between him and Bonaparte. I am sure this advice is unnecessary, but the follies of ——— and ——— make one feel an inclination to give it.”

It will be seen from this communication how uncertain Fox was as to his royal friend and patron, and that he was in fact humouring him. He might have had suspicions as to his fealty, for in this very year Mr. Pitt was astonished at receiving a message from him in a circuitous manner, to the effect that his royal highness had not the slightest disinclination towards him; that he had entertained the thought, when he came to power, of giving his confidence to Lord Moira, and at one time he had intended employing Mr. Fox; but now he was satisfied, from the parties themselves, that he could not do better than employ

him, Mr. Pitt. But he could not make way with the haughty statesman, who never compromised what he felt towards him—something, it would seem, bordering on contempt. He merely replied that he entertained a “due respect and proper sense of duty” towards the Prince, but gave him what was only a rebuke, saying he trusted, as he was certain his royal highness did, that the occasion for coming to a decision on such matters was very far off, and that in the meantime he might give his confidence to such ministers as had his father’s confidence. Relating this to Mr. Rose, Mr. Pitt set the overture down to a wish to win his support during this very discussion of his offer to take a command.* This was a harsh and prejudiced view, and we may rather accept the idea that it was a caprice, that came of anger and disgust at his treatment by the Prime Minister.

* Rose, “Diaries,” ii. 58.

CHAPTER XXXII.

1801—1803.

UNFORTUNATELY in January, 1804, the King, agitated and harassed by political difficulties and family quarrels, was once more to hover on the gulf of derangement. The publication of his letter to his son, which amounted, as he considered it, to an attempt to excite the nation against him, had sunk into his heart, and helped to disorder his intellect. Once more the hopes of the Prince and his friends were excited. Though the King "recovered," as it was considered, in a few weeks, his intellect seems to have continued disordered during the greater part of the year. Nor can we think it surprising when we consider how the unfortunate monarch was baited and worried both within and without his household. Instead of approaching him with the most soothing and tender treatment, the Queen, affecting to dread some outburst, avoided his presence, and assumed a perpetual silence. His own family looked on him with distrust. The proper doctors (the Willises), who understood his case, were not suffered to attend, and his mind was hopelessly distracted with ministerial changes.

All students of political life are familiar with the curious attitude of Mr. Pitt, the real leader of the party now in power, and who had allowed the *fainéant* Addington to take his place until the moment came when it suited to thrust him out of office. More amusing, however, were the airs of the substitute, who, with an exquisite self-complacency, began to take the matter seriously, and to think that it was owing to his own force that he was where he was. However, the nation was not

inclined to endure him longer, and were calling loudly for his deposition.

The Prince, who had been declaring that his father's illness would last many months ("The wish, Harry, was father to the thought!" exclaimed Pitt scornfully when this was reported to him), had been closeted with Mr. Addington on several occasions, but was soon to learn that there was nothing to be gained. We, however, now find him engaged in negotiating arrangements about a regency with the Premier. Sheridan, on the question of the Prince's inability to command, had taken Mr. Addington's side, which produced a coolness between him and his royal patron: But he was now once more in high favour. The post of receivership of the Duchy of Cornwall had fallen vacant on the death of Lord Elliot, and the Prince, unsolicited, now conferred it on Sheridan "as a trifling proof of that sincere friendship he had always professed and felt for him during a long series of years. I wish to God," he added fervently, "it was better worth your acceptance." The person to whom the recipient, full of gratitude, wrote the news was Mr. Addington, as "a person who would be glad of it."

"It has been my pride and pleasure to have exerted my humble efforts to serve the Prince without ever accepting the slightest obligation from him; but in the present case, and under the present circumstances, I think it would have been really false pride and apparently mischievous affectation to have declined this mark of his royal highness's confidence and favour. I will not disguise that, at this peculiar crisis, I am greatly gratified at this event. Had it been the result of a mean and subservient devotion to the Prince's every wish and object, I could neither have respected the gift, the giver, nor myself. I trust I need not add, that whatever small portion of fair influence I may at any time possess with the Prince, it shall be uniformly exerted to promote those feelings of duty and affection towards their Majesties, which, though seemingly interrupted by adverse circumstances, I am sure are in his heart warm and unalterable—and, as far as I may presume, that general concord throughout his illustrious family, which must be looked to by every honest subject as an essential part of the public strength at this momentous period."*

This office was worth £2000 a year; but it is curious to find that on the appointment being made a claim was made to it by Lord General Lake, whose brother produced a formal deed promising the reversion!†

* Moore, "Life of Sheridan," ii. 321. † Lord Colchester, "Diary," i. 481.

It is not easy to gather up the threads of these advances. The clue, however, will be found in what we fear was the clue to most of the transactions in which the unsteady Prince engaged, viz. his own immediate interest, and the chance of succeeding to the regency. As it seemed to be at hand, he would take the shortest and readiest mode to the issue; as it became remote, he abandoned what he had undertaken. Thus, as the King's illness seemed gaining ground, we find him eagerly negotiating with the minister. As he recovered, he returned to the old Opposition principles. This may seem a harsh view, but it is the only one that makes all consistent.

Sheridan (says Mr. Moore, who had seen all the letters and papers) formed a sort of connecting link between Carlton House and the minister, and took a leading part in the negotiations for the regency. The Prince was indeed a little alarmed at a rumour that got abroad that it was intended associating the Queen and the Duke of York in the Government, but was reassured on this point by Fox. The latter, as is well known, took a wholly different view, and possessed with a sort of hatred of "the Doctor," founded on the lowest possible opinion of his "lies" and taste for scheming, was for the sounder and broader policy of joining with the old Whigs, or semi-Tories, the Grenvilles, and the rest, for the purpose of ejecting the obnoxious minister. An address got up at Carlton House by Sheridan and his friends was presented to Fox, entreating him not to adopt such a course, "his royal highness deprecating all party struggle at a moment when the defence of all that is dear to Britons ought to be the single sentiment that should fill the public mind."*

Mr. Tierney had already joined the administration; Sheridan, Moore says, was willing to do so; and now Erskine, being offered the Attorney-Generalship, might naturally suppose he was at liberty to accept. He, however, consulted the Prince through Sheridan, and received a reply that no doubt astonished him. "While he expressed the most friendly feelings towards Erskine he declined at the same time giving any opinion as to either his acceptance or refusal of the office of Attorney-General, if offered to him under the present circumstances. He also added the expression of his regret that a proposal of this nature should have been submitted to his consideration by one, of whose attachment and fidelity to himself he was well convinced, but who ought to have felt, from the line of conduct adopted and persevered in by his royal highness, that he was the very last person that should have been applied to for either his opinion or countenance respecting the political conduct or connections of

* "Life of Sheridan," ii. 326.

any public character, especially of one so intimately connected with him, and belonging to his family.”*

He was now much under the influence of this new favourite—Lord Moira. He had generally some such friend of the kind, whom he took up in this almost romantic style, and discarded as speedily. In due course Lord Moira fell, and Lord Wellesley succeeded; indeed, a long list could be made of those privileged whom he affectionately called by their christian-names, and soon grew tired of. By Lord Moira’s direction he was now regulating his conduct.

There was another of his friends and boon companions who had begun to complain of the fickleness of a Prince’s attachments, under the sense of obligations unrequited, of promises unkept. The fierce and uncontrolled Francis, the *habitué* at the Pavilion, whose children had been fondled by his royal highness, was now a bitter disappointed man—discontented with Fox, with his party, with all things. There was some just retribution, however, in the fact that he, who had been so pitiless and even cruel, should himself feel some sharp pangs, taking the shape of neglect and mortification. It may be said in favour of the Prince that it must have been difficult to live on harmonious terms with such a man. One that would impatiently quicken his royal host when lagging through some rambling story, with a “Well, sir; well, sir; what then?”—(to be, however thus rebuked: “If Sir Philip Francis will let me proceed”)—or thunder unceremoniously if kept waiting too long at Carlton House gate; or, as we have seen, burst out laughing during the Prince’s song, must have been rather a trying companion. There were claims and promises. When Francis was offered the government of the Cape, the Prince engaged—we are now anticipating—impulsively, if he accepted the post, to get him promoted to something substantial. In one of his letters he shows an almost piteous obsequiousness.

“September 24, 1801.

“SIR,

“Confiding in your Royal Highness’s constant goodness to me, I cannot restrain myself from taking the liberty to express to you the concern and anxiety with which I heard last night of the unfortunate accident your Royal Highness has met with. The same intelligence says that, although you suffer considerable pain, it is not attended with danger. I hope soon to have the honour of waiting on your Royal Highness, and the happiness of finding you perfectly recovered. Believe me, Sir, that in every event in

* “Life of Sheridan,” ii. 323.

which your Royal Highness is concerned I take the part that belongs to the sincerest attachment to you. It was inclination before it was gratitude, and assuredly will live as long as I do.

"There is another subject, Sir, on which I have nothing to express to you but pleasure and thankfulness. I have just heard of your generous intentions in favour of Ralph Johnson. What the young man's engagements or views may be, or those of his guardians for him, I do not know; but I can answer for him that he feels the honour done him by your Royal Highness more sensibly and with deeper acknowledgment than perhaps he may submit to you in proper terms for himself.

"I have the honour to be, etc.

"P. FRANCIS."

But his bitterness seems to have been chiefly against Fox, against whom he inveighed and nourished the deepest resentment. In 1798 Fox had withdrawn from politics, thus causing the division in his party. And, *à propos* of this secession, Francis entered into a correspondence with the attractive Duchess of Devonshire, who, as we have seen, was devoted to the man of the people. The mixture of serious argument and gallantry is here well illustrated, and makes us lament that the talent of writing in such a strain seems now to be almost a lost art.

"I am particularly vexed," she wrote to him, on November 29th, 1798, "at having been prevented writing, lest you should think I was affronted or unworthy of your kindness. But, besides having been at a country ball, and having had a house full of Derbyshire savages, I have been vexed to my heart's core. Oh! my dear Mr. Francis, you must have spoilt me, since I feel a pleasure in telling you how worried I have been, though I cannot tell you the cause, though you can do me no good, and though my poor heart has been torn to pieces. You know not what you have done in taking some interest in such a being as I am; you must often listen to lamentation, because, though in reality an old woman, my heart and mind are still childish; nor can I encounter without pain a world that is too wise for me. I must feel unkindness when I meet with it, and anxiety when it presses round me. Do not be angry at my boring you with all this stuff; indeed, if you knew me such as I am, you would know that I pay you a compliment in writing thus.

"How can you suppose me angry for your averring your opinion? I knew it long ago, and wished to bring you to own it, that I might attack it; but low spirits, which have taken from me the power of writing for these ten days, have also weakened

my strength as a champion. You are wrong, indeed you are. Charles has, and always had, faults of heedlessness, that may injure him, and have, as a statesman, but never as the greatest of men. Who, at one glance, took in the view of the French Revolution? Who saw its consequence, and warned us of the inutility of opposing its progress? Will not posterity remember this and bless him? Will not they remember his merciful wishes on the condemnation of Louis XVI., and the various times he would have checked (and it could have been done then) our wild career? Who has sacrificed even his darling popularity to his principles? His standard is in the hearts of men, in my heart of hearts, in your own, for you are one of those formed by Nature with the fire, the animation that, I am sure, must make you shrink from any other cause. I blame not George Tierney; but he is no great man. A man who is only bright in the absence of superior merit is in the right to make use of his opportunity, for it will not last long. No, would I were a man, to unite my talents, my hopes, my fortune with Charles's, to make common cause, and fall or rule, with him.

"The confidence of men is with Pitt; they respect him, as often a wife does her husband; think him a very disagreeable fellow, but a good manager of their views and happiness; and now, though they think he has been going and going on too far, yet they still cling to their spouse, lest the separation or divorce should bring on immediate ruin; for they have given up all their settlements, jointure, and even pin-money into his hands; but, whilst they are mingled in the interests of *il caro sposo*, their hearts are with Charles. He is not rich enough for an elopement with him; and the husband, by extreme jealousy and misrepresentation, has hurt him a little in their opinion; but still they love him in secret. He has a heart. Pitt has none. Now I cannot think that they will look on Tierney or Lord Moira, or any pretender I know of, even in the light of a gallant, or even flirt. They feel themselves in a bad situation, and, if long trial at last engages the people to break all connection with Pitt, it will be for no petty intrigue, but for the lover whose abilities and genius could save them by some vast effort of genius, and whom they have so long felt to be their destiny.

"As I am very sure you do not think that I, as a woman, ever was, could be, or am, in love with Charles Fox, you will allow that, in fervour, enthusiasm, and devotion, I am a good friend; and I assure you, dear Mr. Francis, short as our acquaintance has been, I could and would make a very noble battle for you, should anybody attack you, which hitherto has not been the case, as all I have seen admired you as I do. Tell me that you

are not angry, and that I may write on as I think. Form no judgment of my dear sister; for she is ill and low, as she too often is at the beginning of the cold weather."

He replied in the same strain: "Some cruel words in the letter I received from you yesterday have filled me with deep and serious anxiety, and the more as I cannot, if I would, conjecture what grief they relate to, or what is the nature or extent of it. Do not believe it possible that your heart can be 'torn in pieces,' and that mine can be unwounded. On a subject so described, it would be equally unbecoming and useless in me to ask a question, or to solicit an explanation. Sorrow is certainly softened by participation. To share the burden is to lighten it; but that case supposes a long and mutual intimacy, and cannot be extended to many. From woman to woman, it is most dangerous. In a few minutes, I have hated at first sight. In others, as you perhaps may think possible enough, I have loved without waiting for a second. But mere love should beware of confessing anything to its object, except its own passion. The party that desires more intends to command. With all these wise considerations before you, it is for yourself to judge whether any service, or council, or consolation, of mine can be of any use to you. If not, you ought not to tell me; for though I know you would be safe, you do not. Religion comes late, and serves only to console. Can you endure, and will you forgive, these moral airs in a man who never pretended to be anything, and to be a moralist least of all? With all possible veracity, I do confess to you that I am very wise for everybody but myself. Wisdom has been beaten into me by experience, of which no man, I do believe, has had more than I have had, to my cost, crowded into the same number of years. Yet, born and bred as I was in adversity, and traversed by disappointment in every pursuit of my life, I never should have been unhappy if it had been possible for me never to be imprudent. My mind is come at last to maturity, of which you, if you please and if you want it, may at all times have the benefit. Should I fail in judgment, you will find me safe, faithful, and discreet. You talk of the shortness of our acquaintance; why, then, if all this be not mere moonshine, and if we are really and seriously to be friends, we have no time to lose. The fact, however, is that I have known you many years, and long before the date of our acquaintance. It is true I saw you at a great distance, and as a bird of passage. The planet passed by, and knew nothing of the poor astronomer who watched her motions and waited for the transit. Hereafter, I hope you will not insist on my seeing you through a telescope. Honestly and honourably, I believe I

meant nothing but that, while you were writing to me, you thought of nobody but C. F. Not at all, however, in the sense of being in love with him. That idea never entered into my thoughts. On that subject, I begin to be what fine ladies call nettled, by your eternally answering me at cross purposes, or telling me, as you do in effect, that six and four do not make nineteen, and as if I had maintained the contrary. My allegation is that I am forsaken, etc. Your defence is that he is a man of transcendent abilities, and externally amiable in private life. I admire the discovery, but it gives me no sort of consolation. . . . I feel like gummed velvet, and wish I could hate you for half an hour, that I might cut you into a thousand little stars, and live under the canopy. On Monday I wrote till I could not see, without saying half what I intended. You say I must have spoilt you. Will you be so good as to tell me what sort of being you were before you were spoiled? As for me, it is a clear case that I must be bewitched, or I never would trust a declared enemy with such a letter as the enclosed. . . . You say, 'I knew your opinion long ago, and wish to bring you to own it, that I might attack it.' Most dear insidious person! I had no disposition to inveigh against Mr. Fox's conduct, nor should I have said anything about it if you had not provoked me on one side and ensnared me on the other. Will you now be honourable, and can you be just? Did such a letter deserve no answer?"

With much more in the same style. Both these gay and gallant personages passed through a life of trouble and disappointment: the "Beautiful Duchess" was to close her life entangled in embarrassments, chiefly owing to play.*

In the preceding year the Prince had sent a gracious message to Mr. Pitt, which had been coldly received. In view of the serious condition of the King, the Prince seems to have recurred to this idea—or, at least hoped to conciliate the great commoner; but his advances seemed to lack sincerity and found no favour. This will be seen by following the course of the intrigues his confidants set on foot. In March, 1804, Lord Moira, who was at Edinburgh, opened himself to the Lord Advocate (Hope), who reported to Lord Melville, who in his turn reported to Pitt. The Prince, Lord Moira said with a curious confidence, had early sent a message to Fox and Grey, assuring them that he was sensible of their attachment, but that in the event of a regency he intended to throw himself into Lord Moira's hands. He would not therefore see them. He (Lord Moira) had on this assured

* I have given these extracts at this length, because they illustrate the almost elegant style of communication between an accomplished man and woman of the time.

him that Addington and the present ministry were incapable (i.e. of doing anything for him). A union of all talents was necessary: "Stretch forth your hand to Mr. Pitt! Have you the magnanimity and good sense to lay aside all feeling of estrangement?" The Prince at first put this aside, saying that Mr. Pitt would not act with others, and declaring that Lord Moira and no other should be his minister. "But let me know your feeling as to Mr. Pitt," persisted Lord Moira; but the Prince declared that "Fox and Pitt would never act together." The other again urging it, and adding that he thought it for his good, the Prince exclaimed ardently: "Then I submit entirely to your opinion—to have the broadest ministry possible," though he still thought the elements too discordant, and that Pitt would never be subordinate in the Cabinet. "But," he added, "I shall moderate between Pitt and Fox!" This being duly transmitted to Pitt, it is curious to see with what cold contempt he received it.

"With respect to the Prince's intentions, I must also say to you confidentially that I fear no very certain dependence is to be placed on any language which he holds. The conversation which Lord Moira reports is certainly at variance with the assurances which I have good reason to believe the Prince has held out in other quarters. He has certainly seen both Fox and Grey. The former, I have good reason to believe, understands that in the event of the Prince having the Government in his hands, it is by his (Fox's) advice that he would be guided, and I believe too that his advice is likely to be to apply to me." He added that he could not take part in any Government of which he was not the head.*

Fox seems to have been kept in the dark, for we find him writing much puzzled at what was going on:

"Since last Monday I have not heard one word but from the newspapers, from which I understand that the P.'s visit to Windsor, Friday (of which, by the way, he had apprised me), was prolonged till this day. Moira must, I think, have seen Pitt by this time, as he said he was in a hurry to return to Scotland. I saw Sheridan, and I need not tell you that he was in a terrible fidget. My opinion is that, notwithstanding all these intrigues, the P. will be in essentials quite steady. I think, too, that Pitt and Melville will not be able to get authority to offer him anything that will shake him. I have this day intelligence (which I believe) of an event which will bring all these matters to a crisis—and which, on that, as well as many other accounts, I shall think a very good one. I hear it is quite certain that the Irish

* Lord Stanhope, "Life of Pitt," iv. 137.

Catholics will petition both Houses for complete Emancipation. Upon that question, the P. and Moira must declare themselves, and what will be most satisfactory to me, the Opposition will be marshalled together in a cause that is not merely of a personal nature; for to have so much stress laid upon my coming, or not coming, into office is, to say the least, very unpleasant." *

This scheme having failed, we next learn that upon the critical attacks upon "the milk-and-water Addington" (as Mr. Fox styled him), whose majorities were hourly lessening, the Prince, with much wavering, had made up his mind. He was heard expressing great satisfaction at the prospect of the Doctor's overthrow, and indeed he helped to drive the minister with whom he had been negotiating from power. It is clear that Fox's influence had asserted itself.

Yet what was the end, after all these months of busy intrigue and *finesse*, but failure and discredit! The King, as is well known, laid Fox under a ban. Mr. Pitt, the uncompromising, came into office, and the Prince, baffled, disappointed, and hopeless, was left to console himself with his Moiras and Sheridans.

It was evident that the King was still anything but restored. He was seized with a suspicious mania for dismissing everybody about him—old and faithful servants, lords-in-waiting, and others. In all these illnesses their divisions and jealousies seem to have hindered due and proper care being taken, and the eagerness of his friends to defeat their foes, dragged him from his retirement before he was restored.

At the Drawing Room held in June, he was not well enough to be present: neither was his son, who, however, was seen driving through the town on the box of his barouche. The baffled Prince was himself only recovering from one of those serious sudden attacks to which he was subject all his life, and which he treated with profuse bleeding.

* "Memorials of Fox," iv. 63.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

1804.

WE now turn to another household which for a time has been lost sight of. The young Princess Charlotte was now eight years old; a very pleasing child from the high spirit and character, that gave some anxiety to her aunt, the Princess Royal, in Germany. She exhibited a hot and rather uncontrolled temper, but in other respects was most engaging. Her grandfather appeared to dote upon her. Miss Berry sketches her at this time: "Her face damaged by small-pox to an extent rarely seen at the time among the higher classes; saying she was afraid of dark and dismal stories, and telling a good one herself." She had a taste for the "little accomplishments," could speak French, knew music, but she had a nervous hesitation or stammer in her speech, which she never wholly lost. Indeed it was rather increased in late years, owing to the agitation of dreaded interviews with her father.

This amiable and interesting young creature seems indeed to owe her defects to the intolerant system under which she was brought up: her father and mother being at war, her mother at war with her grandmother, her grandfather at war with her father, she herself—in hackneyed phrase—a bone of contention among them all.

Miss Gale had succeeded Miss Hayman as sub-governess; Mrs. Gagarin (a worthy German who had been deceived, like Angelica Kauffman, by a false marriage) was dresser; Mrs. Trew was tutor; while Lady Elgin directed all. She lived at a country-place known as Shrewsbury House, near Shooter's Hill.

Her mother, residing at Montagu House, and enjoying the powerful protection and favour of the King, was living a

sober and exemplary life, quiet and rational. We find her cultivating a taste for music, painting, and modelling. Among the friends now gathered around her were the Mintos, Carnarvons, Hawkesburys, Dundases, Windhams, Grenvilles, Cannings, besides Lords Eldon and Loughborough, the former of whom, perhaps, had rallied to her, because of his "dear old master." These she received at dinner and seemed to have attached to her, and the only objection that could be taken to her behaviour was a certain indiscretion of speech—talking loudly, and abusing the Prince at her own table. The first ride taken by the King after his recovery in 1801 was down to Blackheath to see her, nor did he tell anyone whither he was going till he just reached her door. She was not up, but jumped out of bed to receive him, arrayed in her bedgown and nightcap! He told Lord Uxbridge that she ran in his head perpetually during his illness, and he had resolved to visit her the first time he went out, without telling anybody.* It was owing to his prevision that the Princess was allowed the pleasure of seeing her child, with suitable restraint, so as not to interfere with the progress of her education.

Lord Albemarle gives some child-letters of the young Princess that are singularly interesting and engaging. Like her father, she had violent likings and dislikes; her special aversion being the Bishop of Salisbury (Dr. Fisher), whom she nicknamed the Great "U-p," and Mrs. Udney. A most amusing incident connected with this prejudice is the will the little girl drew up, excluding them from any share in her property.†

This harmless pleasantry caused much agitation among her governing powers, and it seems incredible that it could be treated

* Sir G. Elliot, "Life," iii. 217.

† "I make my will. First, I leave all my best books, and all my books to the Rev. Mr. Nott. Secondly, to Mrs. Campbell my three watches and half my jewels. Thirdly, I beg Mr. Nott, whatever money he finds me in possession of, to distribute to the poor, and I leave with Mr. Nott all my papers, which he knows of. I beg the Prayer Book which Lady Elgin gave me may be given to the Bishop of Exeter, and that the Bible Lady Elgin gave me may be given to him also. Also my playthings the Miss Fishers are to have; and lastly, concerning Mrs. Gagarin and Mrs. Lewis, I beg they may be very handsomely paid, and that they may have an house. Lady de Clifford the rest of my jewels, except those that are most valuable, and these my father and mother, the Prince and Princess of Wales, are to take. Nothing to Mrs. Udney for reasons. I have done my Will, and trust that after I am dead, a great deal may be done for Mr. Nott. I hope the King will make him a Bishop.

"CHARLOTTE.

"March, 1806."

"My birds to Mrs. Gagarin, and my dog or dogs to Mrs. Anne Hutton, my chambermaid."

seriously. In the journal of Lady Susan O'Brien, heroine of the well-known runaway episode, what occurred is thus described :

"While I was in town, I was informed of a curious transaction going on at Carlton House, on account of a childish will the Princess Charlotte had made, in which she left half her jewels to Lady de Clifford, half to Mrs. Campbell, and all her *valuable* jewels to her papa and mamma. They suppose Mrs. Campbell concerned in making it, and told the bishop of it, who smiled. [Dr. Fisher, Bishop of Salisbury, preceptor to the Princess Charlotte.] The Prince was displeased, and said 'it was high treason,' and called Mr. Adam, Chancellor of the Duchy of Cornwall, who answered : 'Your Royal Highness has a just conception of the matter.' All this nonsense has been before the Privy Council, whose time might be better employed. The will expresses a wish that Mr. Nott, sub-preceptor, might be made a bishop."*

In short, the matter led to the dismissal of the worthy Mrs. Campbell.

There are many stories of her waywardness, of her affection, of her amusing insubordination. She used to leave the doors wide open, rushing tumultuously into her governess's room. "My dear Princess!" would exclaim the latter, "you should always shut the door after you." "Not I, indeed," she answered, "if you want the door shut, ring the bell;" and then rushed away. Self-willed enough, she would commit some forbidden act, and then say defiantly, "I have done it, now punish me." She went to dine on fixed days with her mother. We find the Princess of Wales giving her daughter such excellent advice as this : "It must have been an honour and pleasure to you that your father wished to see you on his birthday, and I trust you will never in any day of your life deviate from the respect and attachment which is due to the Prince, your father."†

But the good King, hovering as he often was between recovering stages of his malady, saw enough to convince him that this situation of a child of ten years old was dangerous enough. The life led by the father made him quite unsuitable as director of her education, or even as inmate of the same house. Her mother, for other reasons, was equally undesirable. He determined to take her education into his own hands, acting as trustee for the nation.

Mr. Pitt, now in the plenitude of power, feeling that this state of discord would not suit a well-ordered Government, began at once to try and reconcile the parties. As a preparatory step, the

* She had a childish attachment to Dr. Nott.

† Lady Rose Weigall, "Princess Charlotte," 283.

Lord Chancellor, who was high in favour at Court, laboured to reconcile the Queen to her son. This was not so difficult a task. It will be seen that the Prince was eager "to be friends" with his father by the following letter:

THE PRINCE OF WALES TO THE QUEEN.

"Carlton House, July 4th, 1804.

"MY DEAREST MOTHER,

"It is impossible for me, when so many embarrassing circumstances surround us, to refrain longer from assuring you of my undiminished and unalterable tenderness. Believe me that I deeply regret the not having it in my power to do that in person; for, independent of what I suffer from such a cruel privation, as the being separated from you and my sisters, I lament heavily the not paying my duty to the King. Were this allowed me, I should fly to throw myself at the King's feet, and offer to him the testimony of my ever-unvarying attachment. I have long grieved that misrepresentations have estranged his Majesty's mind from me; and the most anxious wish of my heart is for the opportunity of dispelling that coldness. Every consideration renders this distance most severely painful. My first object is the gratification of the feelings of affection, leaving all else to the spontaneous dictates of my father's kindness; and, if any public view can mingle with this sentiment, it is the incalculable importance to his Majesty, and to the country, of the whole Royal Family appearing united in a moment so awful as the present.

"I am ever, my dearest Mother,

"Your dutiful and affectionate Son,

"GEORGE P."

Not the Prince only, but ministers, whenever their position was imperilled, were fond of resorting to the appeal of "the present awful position of the country."

THE QUEEN TO THE PRINCE OF WALES.

"Kew, July 4th, 1804.

"MY DEAREST SON,

"I have this instant received through the hands of Lady Aylesbury, your most affectionate, and I must say, most joyful letter.

"I am anxious to acquaint the King with the contents, which I will do at the first opportunity. Assuring you that I shall not be

behindhand to seize that moment, for which I have so long anxiously prayed, and I trust will be the means of again uniting our too long separated family, in which event no one has suffered more than,

“My dearest Son,

“Your most affectionate Mother and Friend,

“CHARLOTTE.

“I cannot say more at present, being in such a hurry.”

This was a natural and touching reply, showing “heart.” The King, however, was not to be at once beguiled, and the bitterness of his reply to the proposal made to him, shows how deeply he felt the treatment he had received. The Prince had determined to give earnest of his desire to be on good terms with his father by offering him the complete charge of the little Princess, and he perhaps assumed that this spontaneous gift would be received gratefully.

THE KING TO LORD ELDON.

“Kew, July 18th, 1804, 10 m. past 4 P.M.

“The King has this instant received the Lord Chancellor’s note, enclosing the one from the Earl of Moira. Undoubtedly the Prince of Wales’s making the offer of having the dear little Charlotte’s education and principles attended to, is the best earnest he can give of returning to a sense of what he owes to his father, and indeed to his country, and may, to a degree, mollify the feelings of an injured father; but it will require some reflection before the King can answer how soon he can bring himself to receive the publisher of his letters. So much he can add at present, that if he takes the superintendence of his granddaughter, he does not mean to destroy the rights of the mother; that therefore the Princess of Wales, whose injuries deserve the utmost attention of the King, as her own conduct has proved irreproachable, and the attention to what sum the Prince is to pay for the maintenance of the child, though anything which exceeds what he receives on that head from the public must undoubtedly be exonerated by the King.

“GEORGE R.”

However, more than a month passed away, and father and son had not met. As the King told Mr. Rose at Cufnells, he was not willing to meet his son, feeling that “no good could come of it.” He seems to have sagaciously suspected that there was some

object behind; and indeed there was a sort of wish expressed that Lord Moira should receive office as Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, and thus the Prince would have his "friends" in the ministry, though he himself would not have joined. However, persuaded by the Chancellor and Mr. Pitt, the King at last consented to an interview.

THE KING TO LORD ELDON.

"Windsor, August 20th, 1804.

"Though the King trusts his excellent Lord Chancellor, he felt himself authorised on Saturday to acquaint the Prince of Wales, that in consequence of what the Earl of Moira had been authorised to express, his Majesty is willing to receive the Prince of Wales on Wednesday at Kew, provided no explanation or excuses are attempted to be made by the Prince of Wales; but that it is merely to be a visit of civility, as any retrospect could but oblige the King to utter truths, which, instead of healing, must widen the present breach. His Majesty will have the Queen, Princesses, and at least, of his sons, the Duke of Cambridge, present on the occasion. The Lord Chancellor is to fix on twelve o'clock for the hour of the Prince of Wales's coming to Kew. The King cannot conclude without expressing his earnest wishes that the union to take place on Wednesday in the Scott family may prove a source of happiness to them, as his Majesty must ever be a sharer in any event that may add to the domestic felicity of his Lord Chancellor.

"GEORGE R."

Another letter, written on the same day, is devoted to praises of the Princess of Wales, who at an interview had given him the greatest satisfaction. "She will be entirely guided by the King, who has directed her to state whatever she pleases to the Chancellor, as the person alone to be trusted by her in any difficult occasion that may arise." A charge that fully explains the zeal shown by that functionary in her cause.* Mr. Pitt, however, complained that though she had promised an alteration in her bearing towards the Prince, she had stated "particulars in the Prince's behaviour that created alarms in her mind of which

* "What think you now, my lord," said the Prince to Lord Thurlow in one of these contentions, "of your old friend Scott, whom you puffed to me as a sound lawyer and an honest man?" "Indeed, sir," answered Thurlow, whose advanced age had abated neither his convenient courtliness nor his jocular coarseness, "I think he has lost the little law he once had, and is become a very great scoundrel."

she could not get the better." The minister uttered gloomy prognostications as to her future, but admitted that her behaviour might be prompted by jealousy.* But in the interval the Prince seems to have changed his mind, pleading indisposition. The King came specially to Kew for the interview.

THE KING TO LORD ELDON.

"Kew, August 22nd, 1804,

"10 m. past 1 P.M.

"The King, soon after his arrival here with the Queen and his daughters, found the Dukes of Kent and Cambridge; since which the Lord Chancellor's letter has been brought by a servant of the Prince of Wales. The King authorises the Lord Chancellor to express to the Prince of Wales his sorrow at his being unwell; that in consequence of this his Majesty will postpone his interview with the Prince of Wales until his return from Weymouth; and then, as was now intended, it will be in presence of his family at Kew, of which the Lord Chancellor will be empowered to give due notice to the Prince of Wales.

"GEORGE R."

There is here an air of relief at being spared the meeting. The Prince did not write, but he sent the Chancellor's letter by a groom, which was much remarked on. The Chancellor naturally remonstrated at his disrespect to the King, when the Prince, in his roughest mood, said: "Sir, who gave you authority to advise me?" The sturdy Eldon answered him as haughtily, telling him he was his Majesty's Chancellor, that he must get some one else to take messages of the kind—"I will not." The Prince, however, wrote to one of the Princesses, announcing that the meeting might take place after the King's return, and in presence of the Queen and Princesses.†

Indisposition was not the cause of this change. The Prince had learned what an increase of favour had been extended to his wife, and that if he gave up his daughter to the King the Princess of Wales was to benefit by the step. The little Princess had been asked to a ball at the Castle, and being told that she might bring a friend, instantly named her mother.‡ A house, too, had been already secured for her, with apartments for her mother whenever she should choose to visit her.

The Prince's relations to Fox since the later crisis had considerably improved. On Fox's rejection by the King, the Prince

* Rose, "Diaries," ii. 173.

† Auckland, "Correspondence," iv. 209.

‡ Ibid.

had taken the matter up warmly, assuring Sir Philip Francis of his "entire and perfect approbation of these resolutions, and desires further that it may be known, and understood, and published to all the world in his name and authority that, in this personal rejection of Mr. Fox, he considers himself as the party injured; that he is not at all the dupe of Mr. Pitt's excuses and explanations; that he sees clearly that Mr. Fox is rejected as *his* friend, and that it was meant to wound him through his side."

It should be stated, however, that old Mr. Coke, of Norfolk, told Haydon that when he heard that Fox was willing enough to join the Government, he had declared to him that he would sever himself from him; and that Fox on this had written, assuring him that he was determined never to join Mr. Pitt.

"You may think, perhaps, that I might have written on the Prince's negotiation, if it may be so called" (wrote Mr. Fox to his friend Grey in September); "but I cannot make out the facts, and still less all the motives, to my own satisfaction. Lauderdale would, of course, tell you all he knew, when he left London, and I knew no more till my return from Cheltenham, when the thing was quite over, and I am not sorry (as you may suppose) that I had no advice to answer for. It originated with Tierney; and Sheridan was, I believe, kept out of it till quite towards the close. My judgment is, that if a reconciliation could have taken place by the Queen it was right, if by Pitt it was wrong; but Tierney saw no such distinction. The refusal to see the King had gone before I knew anything more than when I went to Cheltenham: I should not have advised it. It seems to be all over; and the only thing that is of any consequence is to know how far Moira acted fairly in it, or indeed how far he was concerned at all. His advice to the Prince to offer the young Princess to the King was certainly very bad, but I believe it was only folly; and the Prince has (upon good pretences enough) done away the offer completely. Some accounts from Weymouth say the King is very well, others the reverse. My way of reconciling them is, that he is better in health, but still insane."

Fox himself, or some one inspired by Fox, now pointed out to the Prince this danger. The King thought that Sheridan had interfered.

The King had repaired later to Mr. Rose's place at Cufnells, where he had many interesting conversations with his host, which give a high opinion of his sagacity and observation, and show what a pleasant companion he could be. In these interviews were also revealed, with a terrible intensity, the state of his feelings towards his son.

When his daughter was thrown from her horse on the road,

he peremptorily required her to take her choice : if hurt, to drive home ; but if not, to remount and drive on. When remonstrated with, he answered quietly that " he could not bear that any of his family should want courage." It being urged that driving home after such an accident scarcely amounted to lack of courage, he made the remarkable speech : " Perhaps it may be so ; but I thank God there is but one of my children who wants courage, and I will not name him because he is to succeed me ! "

This most painful utterance of course came of an excited state of mind ; and rationally as the King could discourse, it seems he uttered many incoherences. And when he was at Weymouth, Sir R. Wilson, later one of the Prince's faction, was busily engaged in noting down the most extravagant of his speeches, which was shown about, to the Prince among others, who sent back a very civil message to the effect that " he would make it as public as he could."*

The King, however, felt quite satisfied that he was to have the charge of his favourite, the young Princess ; and in his rides with his host explained the plans he had formed. He had thought of Lady George Murray as governess, widow of a Bishop of St. David's. In one very pleasing conversation he discussed the point in all its bearings, suggesting that there might be a danger of the Duke of Athole having an influence over her, with other matters, which showed that he had weighed the subject carefully.

On November 7th, the King wrote to " his " Lord Chancellor, to inform him that he was now ready to receive the Prince, as had been proposed.

THE PRINCE OF WALES TO THE LORD CHANCELLOR.

" Brighton, November 8th, 1804.

" The Prince of Wales without delay acknowledges the receipt of the Chancellor's letter, and will, in consequence of the gracious intention signified from his Majesty, be in London to-morrow evening with Lord Moira, who has just arrived at Brighthelmstone. The Earl of Moira is authorised by the Prince to wait upon the Chancellor at any hour on Saturday morning that his lordship may please to appoint."†

Lord Moira accordingly saw the Chancellor, and begged him to assure the King of his son's dutiful and affectionate sentiments.

The meeting at last took place between the father and son

* " Life of Sir R. Wilson," p. 327.

† Eldon MS., quoted in Mr. Jesse's " Reign of George III."

on November 12th, and the first person to whom the King communicated the result was his favourite, the Princess of Wales. It will be seen how warmly he wrote to her :

“ Windsor Castle, November 13th, 1804.

“ MY DEAREST DAUGHTER-IN-LAW AND NIECE,

“ Yesterday I and the rest of the family had an interview with the Prince of Wales, at Kew. Care was taken on all sides to avoid all subjects of altercation or explanation, consequently the conversation was neither instructive nor entertaining ; but it leaves the Prince of Wales in a situation to shew whether his desire to return to the family is only verbal or real, which time alone can prove. I am not idle in my endeavours to make inquiries that may enable me to communicate some plan for the advantage of the dear child. You and I, with so much reason, must interest ourselves ; and its effecting my having the happiness of living more with you is no small incentive to my forming some ideas on the subject, but you may depend on their not being decided upon without your thorough and cordial concurrence ; for your authority as a mother it is my object to support.

“ Believe me, at all times, my dearest daughter-in-law and niece,

“ Your most affectionate Father-in-law and Uncle,

“ GEORGE R.”

To “ my ” Lord Chancellor, as he always rather affectedly styled Lord Eldon, he wrote that the interview had been “ decent.” But Mr. Pitt learned that the Prince was “ uttering great lamentations at having found the King so broken in all respects.” The minister, however, had reason to believe that intrigues were on foot to undo what had been done, clearly pointing at Fox.

Mr. Fremantle, who was present, thus describes the meeting : “ The royal party consisted of the King, Queen, Prince of Wales, Duke and Duchess of York, Lady Ilderton and General Fitzroy ; the other Princes and Princesses at different tables in the same room. I was very near the King’s table, and nothing could be better acted than his manner. I can’t say the same of the Prince. He was evidently very much out of spirits and in ill-humour, hardly spoke a word to anybody, and looked very ill. It is quite impossible this reconciliation can last.” *

This is explained by a sort of negotiation which was being carried on simultaneously ; there being thus, according to the hackneyed phrase, wheels within wheels.

The heaven-born minister was now very anxious to gain over the section of the Opposition known as “ the Prince’s friends.”

* “ Court and Cabinets,” p. 366.

This curious incident is thus described in a letter of Fox's: "The P. sent for me to tell me of the message he had had from the K., and of an interview which Lord Moira had had with Pitt. With regard to the first, it seemed only a continuation of what had passed before the Weymouth journey, and when he did see the King (almost all the family present) at Kew, he says there was no cordiality or pretended affection, but common talk on weather, scandal, etc.—a great deal of the latter, and as the P. thought, very idle and foolish in the manner, and running wildly from topic to topic, though not absolutely incoherent. With respect to Lord Moira's meeting with Pitt," Fox goes on, "he said that Pitt had expressed a particular desire of having him (Moira) in the Cabinet, and a general wish to admit many of the P.'s friends. I rather think Moira, whom I saw separately, added hopes of time bringing about all. That Moira had declared explicitly that he could do nothing without me and my friends. I asked whether it was considered that any proposition had come from Pitt, to which either H.R.H. or I were to give any answer; this was answered by a most explicit negative; so that there was no difficulty for us—nothing having been said to us, there was nothing for us to say or do. Here there seemed to be an end, and a very good end, of all this folly; but I understood from Moira that he was again to see either Pitt or Melville, and to know positively whether or no the P. was to have a military command offered him."

This seems to disclose the motive for the Prince's eagerness for the reconciliation, in the hope of obtaining something substantial, and which he had set his heart upon. Mr. Fox thought that, "notwithstanding all these intrigues, the P. will be in essentials quite steady. But he also thought that Pitt would not get authority to offer him anything that will shake him."*

The King now assuming that all had been arranged as regards the transfer of the young Princess to his care, drew up a plan for her education:

"Enclosure.—The Prince of Wales having, through the Earl of Moira, expressed his wish that the education and care of the person of his daughter should be placed under the immediate inspection of the King, his Majesty is willing to take this charge on himself, and has prepared a house at Windsor for the reception of the Princess Charlotte. The sum now issued each quarter, out of his Majesty's Civil List, for the maintenance and education of the young Princess, should in future be paid into the hands of the person who shall be named by the King to defray those expenses; and such additional charges as may arise

* "Memorials of Fox," iv. 62.

from the change of establishment will be defrayed by the King.

"His Majesty proposes to name a bishop to superintend Princess Charlotte's education, as it cannot be that alone of a female; but she, being the presumptive heir of the crown, must have one of a more extended nature. His Majesty also thinks it desirable that the bishop should fix on a proper clergyman to instruct the young Princess in religion and Latin, and daily to read prayers: that there should be another instructor for history, geography, belles lettres, and French; and masters for writing, music, and dancing; that the care and behaviour of the Princess should be entrusted to a governess; and (as she must be both day and night under the care of responsible persons) that a sub-governess and assistant sub-governess should be named.

"These seem the necessary outlines, to form such a plan as may make so promising a child turn out, as it is the common interest of the King and his family, and indeed the whole nation, eagerly to wish."

When this paper was handed to the Prince he received it with much discontent. Mr. Fox learned from him what had occurred on the occasion:

"The Prince expressed, in a written note, his surprise that, after what had passed, such a proposition should be made to him, and sent it back. Both Pitt and the Chancellor replied, first insinuating that the Prince ought to have shown more respect to a paper coming directly from his Majesty, and saying they had not understood Moira as the Prince did. The Prince sent an answer, disclaiming of course all intentional disrespect to the King, refusing peremptorily to give up his daughter, and for what had passed referring them to Moira, to whom he said he transmitted their notes. Luckily enough, Moira had left with the Prince a written summary of what had passed between Pitt and him, which entirely justified the Prince's interpretation. Since this I have heard no more; but I read in the newspaper that the preparations making for the Princess of Wales and the child at Windsor are discontinued."

From another account we find that Pitt sent the Prince a very harsh and uncivil rebuke for making such a reply to the King.

A very painful dispute then arose, in which a question of veracity was concerned, and as to whether the Prince had ever agreed to consign his daughter to the charge of the King. It was insisted that he had done so through Lord Moira. The truth seems to be, that the Prince was disgusted at the mode in which his advances had been received, and at not receiving anything by way of consideration for his concessions. Finding that

all was to turn to the profit of the Princess of Wales, he was now eager to withdraw from what he had engaged. In such cases there almost inevitably arises a question of what has been promised or conceded. The version that his friends gave out now follows; but Lord Grenville, dining at Carlton House on November 29th, had from the Prince himself a fuller account of his grievances:

"He laid his principal stress on the following points—viz. that Lord Moira had been pressed to accept a Cabinet place, which he had refused, on the ground that the Prince would not separate himself from those whom he had advised with at the end of last session; that it had, therefore, been understood that the reconciliation was to have no political reference whatever; that he had found things at Windsor as bad as they had been represented—no cordiality (hardly common civility) towards himself; a power of restraining himself [i.e. the King's] and talking rationally for some time, and on some points, but no day passing without much of a different description, and many points very prevalent in his mind of a character extremely irrational; not a word said to him during three days' stay at Windsor of the arrangements making respecting his daughter, and on his return to town a message sent to him through the Chancellor, referring to and misrepresenting what had before passed on the subject between Lord Moira and Mr. Pitt, which the King construes into a wish expressed by the Prince that his Majesty should take upon himself the entire direction of her education. This wish has been positively denied by the Prince, and thereupon they are at issue, the Prince having referred to Lord Moira, who is in Scotland, for the truth of his statement, and declaring that nothing shall induce him to put his child out of his own control, particularly under circumstances so little auspicious as those which result from the King's present state of mind. He desired you might know all this. How it is to end, I do not even guess."

The annoyance and even rage of the King at this sudden turn in matters is shown by his bitter letter of December 16th, to Lord Eldon. "The King," it ran, "though he has banished every spark of irritation and impatience, from feeling truth and fair dealing is the honourable line to combat misapprehension, chicane, and untruth, has with stoical indifference waited the arrival of some information," etc.

Lord Moira having arrived, the controversy warmed afresh; but it would seem that the harsh construction put on the Prince's behaviour was not warranted, for it turns out that in the original proposal the young Princess was offered to the care of the King

exclusively. This, as Lord Moira explained, was intended to bar all interference on the part of the Princess of Wales.*

It was soon felt that this state of things could not continue. Some interviews followed between Mr. Pitt and Lord Moira, and soon proposals for mutual accommodation were made. Explanations took place between them, in which the former admitted that the Prince's view was more or less correct, and showed himself very anxious to come to an arrangement. The King, however, showed his bitterness by refusing to see Lord Moira.

This result, according to all accounts, was owing to Lord Moira, whose position was rather an awkward one. Discussions followed between the Prince and Chancellor, in which the former, referring to the statement that he had refused to see the Chancellor, used singular language, saying that it was "a strange fabrication of the King," or a "malicious suggestion of some other person." He also stated very plainly that he had had legal advice as to his rights. However, he ended by graciously saying that his view was to gratify the King's wishes. In this happy disposition, though the King remained cold and wounded, it was not difficult to arrange matters.

The Prince had already a little encounter in the House of Lords with the Chancellor. In one instance the Duke of Clarence reminded the latter of the irregular frequency with which he left the Woolsack to address the House upon the same question. The Chancellor made no reply at the moment, but referred on a subsequent night to the expressions of the Duke of Clarence. Upon this the Prince of Wales, in explanation, disclaimed, on the part of the Duke, all personal offence, and declared that "he understood his noble relation as merely illustrating the necessity of a liberal and indulgent construction of the orders of the House." "The observations of the Prince of Wales were made with a facility and propriety which produced expressions of regret that he addressed the House so rarely."

THE KING TO THE LORD CHANCELLOR.

"(End of December, 1804.)

"His Majesty, in the paper which the Lord Chancellor communicated by the King's command on the 23rd November to the Prince, referred in the preamble to the Prince's wish, expressed

* In May, 1805, the King showed his regard for the Princess of Wales by presenting her with two beautiful Arabian horses and an elegant service of gold. He had also given her the rangership of Greenwich Park.

through the Earl of Moira. That wish was expressed in the Earl's letter of the 17th July last, in which the Lord Chancellor was requested to tender the Prince's humble duty to his Majesty, with the profession that, if it was his Majesty's inclination, nothing could be more highly gratifying to the Prince than to see the Princess Charlotte taken under the King's especial direction.

"His Majesty, therefore, in the preamble of the paper, referred to the wish which had been so communicated on the part of the Prince, and has accordingly considered the communication through the Earl of Moira as representing that the Prince wished to see the Princess Charlotte taken under his Majesty's special direction, in consequence of the Prince's understanding that such was his Majesty's wish and desire.

"The King repeats, what he has before stated to the Lord Chancellor and Mr. Pitt, and which he has been informed they represented to the Earl of Moira, that his Majesty regarded the communication from the Prince, founded upon his desire to gratify what he understood to be the King's wishes, as a step very acceptable to his Majesty, and conformable to the sentiments of duty which the Prince had expressed.

"His Majesty has uniformly stated that, in his taking upon himself the care and management of the Princess Charlotte, he must be understood to do so in a sense consistent with all the attention due to each of the parents of the Princess.

"His meaning was to form the best plan he could for the education and governance of the Princess, and to refer that plan to the consideration of the Prince, and to make such communications respecting it to the Princess of Wales as the nature of their respective relations to the Princess Charlotte seemed to require. It will be his Majesty's earnest desire to act according to this principle.

"His Majesty has great satisfaction in believing that there is reason to think that the Prince is likely to concur in the measures proposed by his Majesty, if the misapprehensions which have been entertained are removed; and he trusts that the explanations which have taken place may effectually remove them. If that should happily be the case, his Majesty will proceed to state, for the consideration of the Prince, the names of the persons who may appear proper to fill the very important stations mentioned in his Majesty's paper; and as this measure originated and has been carried on in consequence of the Prince's having expressed a wish to meet his Majesty's inclination, it will be most satisfactory to the King that the arrangement should be

completed upon the same footing, and that his Majesty's choice should be made with the Prince's entire concurrence."

The Prince's answer to this document has not been found; but its purport appears from the following letter of the King :

THE KING TO LORD ELDON.

"Windsor Castle, Jan. 5th, 1805.

"The King received the Lord Chancellor's note, accompanying the paper of the Prince of Wales, intended as an answer to the one drawn up by the Lord Chancellor and Mr. Pitt; which having met with his Majesty's approbation, he sent a copy of it on the 31st of last month to be delivered or sent by the Lord Chancellor to the Prince of Wales. His Majesty entirely joins in opinion with the Lord Chancellor and Mr. Pitt, that undoubtedly the paper contains expressions liable to observations; but, if the King was to enter into such minute discussion, the main object might be retarded; and, as truth, and what he owes to his subjects, have alone dictated his conduct, provided right is effected, he will not stoop to cavilling on words, which is ever the path of those actuated by meaner sentiments. The King has therefore drawn up a paper this morning, which he trusts is consonant with the opinion contained in the Lord Chancellor's note, which if the Lord Chancellor views in the same light, he desires may be forwarded to the Prince of Wales.

"GEORGE R."

CHAPTER XXXIV.

1805.

THE person appointed to succeed Lady Elgin in the charge of the young Princess was the Dowager Lady de Clifford, a lady who had seen much of the French Court, and, while remarkable for firmness, and even intrepidity of character, seems to have possessed a charm and graciousness that was very attractive. Once travelling with her dying husband in France, she surprised a robber stealing into his room. She seized him by the collar and flung him downstairs. She is pleasantly described in her grandson's (Lord Albemarle) agreeable "Recollections."*

On March 1st, 1805, the King had written to direct the Chancellor to inform the Prince. It is painful to find that he could not bring himself to communicate directly with his son, for he had harshly declared that "he could never forgive his conduct because it was impossible to forget it;" that in a week or two the Court Lodge would be ready to receive the Princess. The same evening Lady de Clifford received the following communication :

THE PRINCE OF WALES TO LADY DE CLIFFORD.

"MY DEAREST LADY DE CLIFFORD,

"I am only this instant returned home, and I have so many letters to write and so much to do this evening that will

* Under her there were two sub-governesses, Mrs. Udney and Mrs. Campbell. Dr. Fisher, then Bishop of Exeter, was the preceptor; and it is curious to find that Lady Pembroke, for whom the King had always a sort of *penchant*, was originally named as governess. Lady George Murray, whom he had spoken of so warmly to Mr. Rose, he seems not to have thought of. Mrs. Campbell had lamented her own unfitness for the post to the King, who replied in Johnsonian phrase: "Madam, I hope we can afford to purchase accomplishments, but we cannot buy principles."

not admit of delay, in order to summon an early meeting to-morrow morning, that it will be too late before I have finished all my business to attempt to come and see your little charge and you. However, at one to-morrow you may be certain of seeing me and, I hope, Mrs. Udney.

"Pray, if possible, let me have the little watch that I may give it to Charlotte in your presence. I shall be most happy to do so for every reason, but I shall consider myself most fortunate the having it in my power thus early in life, after your very short acquaintance with her, not only to prove to her my readiness to acquiesce in, and to forward every reasonable wish she may entertain, but also the implicit confidence I place in you, as well as that you are the medium, and ever must be the properest medium, through which her wishes and inclinations must be conveyed to me. Excuse my saying anything more at present, for I am, as you may believe after so long and so very irritating a day, quite worried to death. If you wish for me later this evening—I mean by that between eleven and twelve o'clock—you will know where to find me.*

"Ever most affectionately yours,
"GEORGE P."

"Carlton House, Friday, 8 o'clock, March 1, 1805.

"P.S.—Say everything that is most kind to the child and to Mrs. Udney, whose goodness in temporising with her present situation I can never forget."

Here was again the recommencement of the old tortuous system; and it is scarcely surprising that the King wrote angrily to Lord Eldon, to declare that he must have full control over the child, declaring too his suspicions that the Prince "meant further chicanery."

Further, a few days before the Prince had been using language to his "dearest Lady de Clifford," which the King declared "he could not sanction." The latter seems to have had an idea of placing his grandchild under the formal guardianship of Lord Eldon, declaring also, that it was "quite charming to see the mother and daughter together, which he had seen on the day before." This extravagant partiality of the sovereign, which blinded him to her defects, explains, as was before hinted, the devotion of the Tories to the cause.

A few days later the Prince, full of good purposes, furnished Lady de Clifford with a paper of instructions for her guidance.

* At Mrs. Fitzherbert's in Tilney Street.

MEMORANDUM FOR LADY DE CLIFFORD FROM THE PRINCE OF WALES.

" March 4, 1805.

"Lady de Clifford and the Bishop of Exeter having now entered upon the important functions committed to them, the Prince is desirous that they should from time to time lay before his Majesty such ideas as occur to him as to the details necessary for carrying into execution the general opinion adopted respecting the education of Princess Charlotte. This memorandum is intended to apprise them of the present state of the business, and to serve as a guide for them in such conversations as his Majesty may honour them with on this subject.

"In consequence of some previous intimation which the Prince had received of his Majesty's wishes, the Prince has expressed that without meaning to discharge himself in any degree of that duty of superintendence and control which nature imposes upon a father in all that relates to the education of his child, he was at the same time desirous of receiving the benefit of his Majesty's gracious assistance and advice in a matter so interesting to his feelings, and of giving the Princess Charlotte the full advantage of that affectionate interest which his Majesty is graciously pleased to take in her welfare. But a reason which it is not here necessary to particularise compelled the Prince to require that the person through whom this communication was made should respectfully but distinctly explain to his Majesty that the Prince could on no account agree to the interference of any other person whatever except his Majesty in the dispositions to be made on this subject, and that this point must at all times be considered as the indispensable condition of the Prince's consent to any arrangement present or future.

"What has hitherto been done on the subject has, as the Prince conceives, been intended to be regulated by this principle. The next point to be adjusted for giving effect to it is that which relates to the residence of Princess Charlotte, on which subject the Prince desires that Lady de Clifford and the Bishop will submit to his Majesty for his gracious consideration the following ideas :

"The Prince thinks that during the period of the year in which he is usually resident in London his daughter can nowhere so properly be placed as under her father's roof, where her education may be carried on without interruption, and where he himself will have the constant opportunity of observing its course and progress. His Majesty's habit of doing business in London several days in each week during most part of the year will afford to the Princess Charlotte ample opportunities of paying

her duty there to the King and Queen as often as they may be pleased to require it, and it is by no means the Prince's idea that this arrangement should exclude such short visits to Windsor during the season of holidays or on other temporary occasions as may be found not to break in too much on the course of her education.

"During those months when the Prince is usually not resident in London, he would have great satisfaction in his daughter's being allowed to reside with his Majesty at Windsor, Weymouth, or elsewhere, reserving to himself in the same manner as above stated the pleasure of seeing her sometimes, if he should wish it, on short and occasional visits.

"The communications already made to Lady de Clifford seem to give every reason to hope that these ideas are very little, if at all, different from those entertained by his Majesty on the subject. And at all events the Prince is confident that they cannot fail to be considered as fresh proofs of his respectful desire to meet his Majesty's wishes in every way consistent with his honour and with the feelings of paternal affection and duty towards his daughter."*

Only a few weeks before this festival he expounded his views at the Antient Music Concert to the Speaker of the House of Commons; and Lord Colchester, in his "Diary," gives a rather favourable idea of the vivacity and even cleverness of his mode of expressing himself:

"*May 8th.*—The Prince of Wales entered into a long conversation with me, condemned the altercations in the House of Commons about naval papers, expressed his surprise at Mr. Pitt saying one day that he would not advise Lord Melville's being struck out of the Privy Council, and announcing upon a subsequent day that he had advised it. Spoke very favourably of Whitbread's manner of opening the charge and carrying on the proceedings against Lord Melville. Wondered Lord Melville did not offer himself for examination; thought that nothing was now left but impeachment. Spoke of the Master of the Rolls's two last speeches as having fallen much below his expectations. Endeavoured to persuade all his friends not to meddle with these quarrels, but to look to the greater concerns of the country in these times of external danger. Ridiculed the idea of Lord Barham, at eighty-two, becoming First Lord of the Admiralty and having a peerage for himself and daughter, accompanied with an intimation that he was only a temporary First Lord, and not to last many weeks. He mentioned also the Catholic question; said that he had so far

* Lord Albemarle, "Fifty Years of My Life," i. 264.

prevailed with Mr. Fox as not to think of bringing forward the whole claim, but to soften it down to a question for a committee. That he had not succeeded quite so easily with his friend Lord Grenville, etc., and then went into high encomiums on his talents," etc.

After this we find him at Stowe, where Lord Buckingham entertained him magnificently, and assembled all "the Grenvilles" to meet him. The festivities began on August 25, and lasted for a week; the Prince, with his brother the Duke of Clarence, and some fifty guests, being welcomed by four hundred of the leading persons of the kingdom. Mr. Fox was also of the party.

We have a pleasing glimpse of him at this time in a picture drawn by the venerable Dr. Burney, Johnson's friend and admirer, who seems to have been enchanted with the polite attentions of the gracious Prince. This, again, is infinitely in his favour, and a mark of true good nature.

"1805.—In May, at a concert at Lady Salisbury's, I was extremely pleased, both with the music and the performance. The former was chiefly selected by the Prince of Wales. . . . I had not been five minutes in the concert-room, before a messenger, sent to me by his royal highness, gave me a command to join him, which I did eagerly enough; when his royal highness graciously condescended to order me to sit down by him, and kept me to that high honour the whole evening. Our ideas, by his engaging invitation, were reciprocated upon every piece and its execution. After the concert, Lady Melbourne, who, when Miss Milbanke, had been one of my first scholars on my return to London from Lynn, obligingly complained that she had often vainly tried to tempt me to dine with her, but would make one effort more now, by his royal highness's permission, that I might meet, at Lord Melbourne's table, with the Prince of Wales. Of course I expressed, as well as I could, my sense of so high and unexpected an honour; and the Prince, with a smile of unequalled courtesy, said, 'Aye, do come, Dr. Burney, and bring your son with you.' And then, turning to Lady Melbourne, he added: 'It is singular that the father should be the best, and almost the only good judge of music in the kingdom; and his son the best scholar.'

"But I heard nothing more of the projected dinner, till I met Lady Melbourne at an assembly at the Dowager Lady Sefton's; when I ventured to tell her ladyship that I feared the dinner which my son and I were most ambitious should take place, was relinquished. 'By no means,' she answered, 'for the Prince really desired it.' And, after a note or two of the best bred civility from her ladyship, the day was settled by his royal

highness for July the 9th. The Prince did not make the company wait at Whitehall (Lord Melbourne's); he was not five minutes beyond the appointed time, a quarter-past six o'clock: though he is said never to dine at Carlton House before eight. The company consisted, besides the Prince and the lord and lady of the house, with their two sons and two daughters, of Earls Egremont and Cowper, Mr. and Lady Caroline Lamb, Mr. Lutterel, Mr. Horner, and Mr. Windham.

"The dinner was sumptuous, of course, etc.

"I had almost made a solemn vow, early in life, to quit the world without ever drinking a dry dram; but the heroic virtue of a long life was upset by his royal highness, through the irresistible temptation to hobbing and nobbing with such a partner in a glass of cherry brandy! The spirit of it, however, was so finely subdued, that it was not more potent than a dose of peppermint water; which I have always called a dram.

"The conversation was lively and general the chief part of the evening; but about midnight it turned upon music, on which subject his royal highness deigned so wholly to address himself to me, that we kept it up a full half hour, without any else offering a word. We were, generally, in perfect tune in our opinions; though once or twice I ventured to dissent from his royal highness; and once he condescended to come over to my argument; and he had the skill, as well as nobleness, to put me as perfectly at my ease in expressing my notions, as I should have been with any other perfectly well-bred man.

"The subject was then changed to classical lore; and here his royal highness, with similar condescension, addressed himself to my son, as a man of erudition whose ideas on learned topics he respected; and a full discussion followed of several literary matters.

"When the Prince rose to go to another room, we met Lady Melbourne and her daughter, just returned from the opera; to which they had been while we sat over the wine (and eke the cherry brandy); and from which they came back in exact time for coffee! The Prince here, coming up to me, most graciously took my hand, and said, 'I am glad we got, at last, to our favourite subject.' He then made me sit down by him, close to the keys of a pianoforte, where, in a low voice, but face to face, we talked again upon music, and uttered our sentiments with, I may safely say, equal ease and freedom; so politely he encouraged my openness and sincerity.

"I then ventured to mention that I had a book in my possession that I regarded as the property of his royal highness. It was a set of my 'Commemoration of Handel,' which I had had

splendidly bound for permitted presentation through the medium of Lord St. Asaph ; but which had not been received, from public casualties. His royal highness answered me with the most engaging good-humour, saying that he was now building a library, and that, when it was finished, mine should be the first book placed in his collection. Nobody is so prompt at polite and gratifying compliments as this gracious Prince. I had no conception of his accomplishments. He quite astonished me by his learning, in conversing with my son, after my own musical *tête-à-tête* dialogue with him. He quoted Homer in Greek as readily as if quoting Dryden or Pope in English ; and, in general conversation, during the dinner, he discovered a fund of wit and humour such as demonstrated him a man of reading and parts, who knew how to discriminate characters. He is, besides, an incomparable mimic. He counterfeited Dr. Parr's lisp, language, and manner ; and Kemble's voice and accent, both on and off the stage, so accurately, so nicely, so free from caricature, that, had I been in another room, I should have sworn they had been speaking themselves. Upon the whole, I cannot terminate my account of this Prince better than by asserting it as my opinion, from the knowledge I acquired by my observations of this night, that he has as much conversational talent, and far more learning than Charles the Second, who knew no more, even of orthography, than Molière's 'Bourgeois Gentilhomme.'

"My next great concert was at Mr. Thomson's, in Grosvenor Square. Before I arrived, from not knowing there was a royal motive for every one to be early, I found the crowd of company so excessively great, that I was a considerable time before I could make my way into the music-room ; which I found also so full, that not only I could not discern a place where I might get a seat (and to stand the whole night in such a heat would have been impossible for me), but also I could not discover a spot where I might look on even for a few minutes, to see what was going forwards, without being bodily jammed ; except quite close to the orchestra, where alone there seemed to be a little breathing room left. To gain this desirable little opening, I ventured to follow closely, as if of their party, two very fine ladies, who made their way (heaven knows how !) to some sofa, I fancy, reserved for them. But what was my surprise, and shame, when upon attaining thus my coveted harbour, I found I came bounce upon the Prince of Wales, from respect to whom alone no crowd had there resorted ! I had no time, however, for repentance, and no room for apology ; for that gracious and kind Prince laughed at my exploit, and shook me very heartily by the hand, as if glad to see me again ; and obliged me to sit down by him immediately. Nor would he

suffer me to relinquish my place, even to any of the Princes, his brothers, when they came to him! nor even to any fine lady! always making a motion to me, that was a command, to be quiet. We talked, as before, over every piece and performance, with full ease of expression to our thoughts: but how great was my gratification, when, upon going into a cooler room, between the acts, he put his hat on his seat, and said, ‘Dr. Burney, will you take care of my place for me?’ thus obviating from my stay all fear of intrusion, by making it an obedience. And his notions about music so constantly agree with my own, that I know of no individual, male or female, with whom I talk about music with more sincerity, as well as pleasure, than with this most captivating Prince.

“Another time, at the Opera, the Prince of Wales, perceiving me in the pit, sent for me to his splendid box; and, making me take a snug seat close behind his royal highness, entered with his usual vivacity into discussions upon the performance; and so re-*jeunied* me by his gaiety and condescension, joined to his extraordinary judgment on musical subjects, that I held forth in return as if I had been but five-and-twenty!”

To this may be added the better-known anecdote of his considerate behaviour to one of his servants. It is thus related by Dr. Croly:

“Being at Brighton, and going rather earlier than usual to visit his stud, he inquired of a groom: ‘Where is Tom Cross? * Is he unwell? I have missed him for some days.’ ‘Please your royal highness, he is gone away.’ ‘Gone away!—what for?’ ‘Please your royal highness (hesitating), I believe—for —Mr.—can inform your royal highness.’ ‘I desire to know, sir, of you—what has he done?’ ‘I believe—your royal highness—something—not—quite correct—something about the oats.’ ‘Where is Mr. —? Send him to me immediately.’ The Prince appeared much disturbed at the discovery. The absentee, quite a youth, had been employed in the stable, and was the son of an old groom who had died in the Prince’s service. The officer of the stable appeared before the Prince. ‘Where is Tom Cross?—what has become of him?’ ‘I do not know, your royal highness.’ ‘What has he been doing?’ ‘Purloining the oats, your royal highness; and I discharged him.’ ‘What, sir! send him away without acquainting me!—not know whither he is gone!—a fatherless boy, driven into the world from my service with a blighted character! Why, the poor fellow will be destroyed: Mr. —! I did not expect this from you! Seek

* This name is assumed.

him out, sir, and let me not see you till you have discovered him.' Tom was found and brought before his royal master. He hung down his head, while the tears trickled from his eyes. After looking steadfastly at him for some moments, 'Tom, Tom,' said the Prince, 'what have you been doing? Happy it is for your poor father that he is gone; it would have broken his heart to see you in such a situation. I hope this is your first offence?' The youth wept bitterly. 'Ah, Tom; I am glad to see that you are penitent. Your father was an honest man; I had a great regard for him; so I should have for you, if you were a good lad, for his sake. Now, if I desire Mr. — to take you into the stable again, do you think I may trust you?' Tom wept still more vehemently, implored forgiveness, and promised reformation. 'Well, then,' said the gracious Prince, 'you shall be restored. Avoid evil company: go, and recover your character: be diligent, be honest, and make me your friend; and—hark ye, Tom—I will take care that no one shall ever taunt you with what is past.'"

"Some years since, a gentleman, whilst copying a picture in one of the State apartments at Carlton House, overheard the following conversation between an elderly woman, one of the housemaids, then employed in cleaning a stove-grate, and a glazier, who was supplying a broken pane of glass: 'Have you heard how the Prince is to-day?' said he (his royal highness had been confined by illness). 'Much better,' was the reply. 'I suppose,' said the glazier, 'you are glad of that;' sub-joining, 'though, to be sure, it can't concern you much.' 'It does concern me,' replied the housemaid; 'for I have never been ill but his royal highness has concerned himself about me, and has always been pleased, on my coming to work, to say, "I am glad to see you about again; I hope you have been taken good care of; do not exert yourself too much, lest you should be ill again."' If I did not rejoice at his royal highness's recovery, ay, and everyone who eats his bread, we should be ungrateful indeed!'"

On the news of the death of Nelson, he addressed the following effusive letter in answer to a person who suggested his attendance at the funeral:

THE PRINCE OF WALES TO MR. ALEXANDER DAVISON.

"I am extremely obliged to you, ^{very} dear Sir, for your confidential letter, which I received this morning. You may be

well assured, that did it depend upon me, there would not be a wish, a desire of our ever-to-be-lamented and much-loved friend, as well as adored hero, that I would not consider as a solemn obligation upon his friends and his country to fulfil; it is a duty they owe his memory, and his matchless and unrivalled excellence. Such are my sentiments; and I hope that there is still in this country sufficient honour, virtue, and gratitude, to prompt us to ratify and to carry into effect the last dying request of our Nelson—by that means proving, not only to the whole world, but to future ages, that we were worthy of having such a man belonging to us. It must be needless, my dear Sir, to discuss over, with you in particular, the irreparable loss dear Nelson ever must be, not merely to his friends, but to his country, especially at the present crisis, and during the present most awful contest: his very name was a host of itself—Nelson and victory were one and the same to us, and it carried dismay and terror to the hearts of our enemies. But the subject is too painful a one to dwell longer upon. As to myself, all that I can do, either publicly or privately, to testify the reverence, the respect I entertain for his memory as a hero, and as the greatest public character that ever embellished the page of history, independent of what I can, with the greatest truth, term the enthusiastic attachment I felt for him as a friend, I consider it as my duty to fulfil; and therefore, though I may be prevented from taking that ostensible and prominent situation at his funeral which I think my birth and high rank entitle me to claim, still nothing shall prevent me, in a private character, following his remains to their last resting-place; for though the station and the character may be less ostensible, less prominent, yet the feelings of the heart will not therefore be the less poignant or the less acute.

“I am, my dear Sir, with the greatest truth,

“Ever very sincerely yours,

“GEORGE P.”

His feelings on this subject were even more excited by meeting with Mr. Scott, Nelson's chaplain and attendant in the *Victory*. “I was once,” he says, “without preparation or the least knowledge of his royal highness, suddenly, I may say somewhat clumsily, in the midst of a party, introduced to the Prince. He immediately rose, grasped my hand, and shed tears; in short, his feelings were so acute, that I retreated into the crowd to spare him. I never can forget the pressure of his hand, nor the sensibility he evinced.” The poor chaplain was writing this appeal from the ()terhouse, the only retreat he could obtain from a grateful c ry. It would seem that he appealed vainly

to the Regent and Lord Moira. Lady Hamilton's treatment is well known; Magrath, his medical officer, met with similar neglect. The midshipman Pollard, who had avenged Nelson's death by shooting the man that killed him, obtained a retreat at Greenwich: having no interest, he never rose higher than a lieutenant.

A long list, indeed, could be furnished of instances of the Prince's generous sympathy for cases of this kind; that is, where there was a certain dramatic element to stir his kindly emotions. Connected with the fate of Nelson was the hard treatment of Lady Hamilton—as to which the Prince declared that his desire was, that Nelson's last wishes should be given effect to in every particular. But, as may be conceived, he had no power and no influence at court, or with ministers. Mr. Warren Hastings was induced to lay his case before him, and bent his proud spirit so far as to set out what would atone for the treatment he had received, mentioning in particular a peerage. He describes in his diary the gracious kindly way in which he was treated. Lord Moira was instructed to do his best, but nothing came of it.

CHAPTER XXXV.

1805.

WITH this year now came the first remarkable symptom of the change in the Prince's political opinions, and which have been generally associated with what is called his treatment of the Whigs five years later. This is a fair element in his vindication, and shows that not only was it the influence of Mr. Fox that had attached him to the party, but that even before Mr. Fox's death his views had been changing. That he should have changed his views can be scarcely urged as a serious reproach, when statesmen of importance did the same, and, without scruple, shifted from ministry to ministry. Nor is he to be judged as severely as a subject. The Catholic question was at this time being pressed, and became, as it generally did, the test or solvent of much clouded opinion. It was significant that Fox now should have doubts of his royal friend as to this crucial point. These misgivings are expressed in letters to his friends.

There was scarcely a year of the Prince's life in which, as Johnson would have called it, his "superfætation of activity," or rather his habit of thoughtlessly taking action where his feelings were involved, did not plunge him into some awkward embarrassment. Early in 1805, he found himself eagerly engaged in ardently forwarding a lawsuit, which related, says Sir S. Romilly, "to the guardianship of a daughter of Lord Hugh Seymour, who had remained, at the death of her parents while she was of very tender years, under the care of Mrs. Fitzherbert. With that lady she had been left by her family till she was between five and six years old, and they then required to have her returned to them. Being an orphan, and without a legal guardian, no person

had a right to remove her, and the principal object of the suit was to have a guardian for her appointed. On the one side were proposed for this office Lord Euston and Lord Henry Seymour, who had been named by Lord Hugh in a will made before the birth of this little orphan; and on the other, Mrs. Fitzherbert, who had in truth become a mother to it. The Master, to whom the matter was referred, approved of Lord Euston and Lord Henry Seymour as guardians; and from his decision Mrs. Fitzherbert brought the matter, by an exception to the report, before the Lord Chancellor, who, after a long hearing, and with less than his usual deliberation, confirmed the Master's report. While the cause was depending, the Prince of Wales, who lived at Mrs. Fitzherbert's house as his own, was extremely anxious about the event of it. He loved the child with paternal affection, and the idea of having her torn from him seemed to be as painful to him as it was to Mrs. Fitzherbert. It was upon the occasion of this cause that he desired once that I, who was one of the counsel for Mrs. Fitzherbert, would meet him at her house. I met him accordingly, and had a very long conversation with his Royal Highness.*

It was thus that he was brought in contact with Romilly. Some years (as Lord Moira had told Lord Lansdowne) he had been eager to know some "sound lawyer of high character and judgment," in whom he might place unbounded confidence, and with whom he was desirous of forming a connection before his accession to the throne.† This was a prudent and praiseworthy idea, but, unluckily, it is not in the power of princes of his nature to secure advisers of this stamp, who, after a time, are alienated or whose advice becomes unpalatable. The Prince, however, during the course of the business took a great liking to him, and in September, 1805, offered to bring him into Parliament. Mr. Creevy was the person to whom the Prince proposed the idea:

"On Monday last, the day after his return from Weymouth and London, in the course of a very long discussion upon these matters, he said he had done one excellent thing during his absence—'he had got a seat in Parliament for Romilly.' He then went at great length into your history and your merits; pronounced you to be the chief of your profession, and a certain future chancellor; and expressed the greatest desire for himself to be the means of your coming into Parliament. He said he had mentioned this in an interview with Fox, in town last week, who had likewise expressed the greatest delight at it. You would have been amused had you heard the familiarity with

* "Memoirs," ii. 117.

Ibid. ii. 126.

which he handled the possible objections to this measure: he said your parliamentary business was principally in the House of Lords, with which it would not interfere, and that you seldom or never attended election committees."

Romilly, however, declined the offer on principle, not wishing to be a nominee of the Prince's, or to enter Parliament save through popular election. Though mortified at his refusal, the Prince's partiality was so great, that he declared enthusiastically that "if he was not permitted to give him a seat, he would take care that he should be sure of one when he wanted it." And presently he found his services useful in a most critical business, which we shall presently deal with.

Meanwhile this affair of young Miss Mary Seymour was engaging his attention. She was with Mrs. Fitzherbert at No. 6, Tilney Street. The present Earl of Albemarle, author of a most interesting book of "Recollections," was living close by, in Audley Street, with Lady de Clifford, the governess of the young Princess. Young Keppel was often found at Tilney Street.

"By my little hostess," he says, "I had the honour of being presented to the Prince of Wales, afterwards George the Fourth. His appearance and manners were both of a nature to produce a lively impression on the mind of a child—a merry good-humoured man, tall, though somewhat portly in stature, in the prime of life, with laughing eyes, pouting lips, and nose which very slightly turned up, gave a peculiar poignancy to the expression of his face. He wore a well-powdered wig, adorned with a profusion of curls which in my innocence I believed to be his own hair, as I did a very large pigtail appended thereto. His clothes fitted him like a glove, his coat was single-breasted and buttoned up to the chin. His nether garments were leather pantaloons and Hessian boots. Round his throat was a huge white neckcloth of many folds, out of which his chin seemed to be always struggling to emerge.

"No sooner was his royal highness seated in his armchair than my young companion would jump up on one of his knees, to which she seemed to claim a prescriptive right. Straightway would arise an animated talk between 'Prinny and Minnie,' as they respectively called each other."

This pleasant sketch shows the Prince in an amiable light. His affection for the child amounted to a passion. He offered to adopt it, and settle £10,000 on it, but Lord Henry Seymour, the guardian, was inflexible.* Being thus opposed, he became more bent on having his way, and even swore an affidavit in Chancery, in which he set out that he believed Mrs. Fitzherbert was the best

* Auckland, "Correspondence," iv. 219.

person to have charge of the education of the child. The Chancellor having decided against the Prince, the case came before the House of Lords on appeal, before another Chancellor, Lord Erskine. The Prince indiscreetly made the most open exertions, canvassing all the peers to support him.* This proceeding was much to the amazement of Romilly, who earnestly deprecated the step to Colonel MacMahon. In the arguments, the high character of Mrs. Fitzherbert received due acknowledgment on all sides. The objection was the entrusting of a Protestant child to her care. The peers mustered strongly; there were some seventy or eighty present. But there was no division, and the Chancellor reversed his decree. Thus was the child handed over to the charge of the Hertfords, who, it was known, would consign her to Mrs. Fitzherbert's care. For her, this day of triumph was to bear fresh troubles.

Mrs. Fitzherbert had indeed felt the matter acutely, and there were circumstances in the case almost of pathetic interest. Lady Horace Seymour had been her dearest friend, and, in the last stage of decline, had been ordered abroad in her husband's ship. Her last act was to confide her infant to her friend. She told Lord Stourton she had tried everything, but at last took a step by which she unconsciously was to sacrifice her own happiness. She had recourse to Lady Hertford, with whom she was formerly intimately acquainted. She requested her to intercede with Lord Hertford, as head of his house, to come to her aid, and demand for himself the guardianship of the child, to give it up to her upon certain conditions as to its education. "This long negotiation, in which the Prince was the principal instrument, led him at last to those confidential relations which ultimately gave to Lady Hertford an ascendancy over him superior to that possessed by Mrs. Fitzherbert herself, and from a friend converted her into a successful rival. Lady Hertford, anxious for the preservation of her own reputation, which she was not willing to compromise with the public even when she ruled the Prince with the most absolute sway, exposed Mrs. Fitzherbert at this time to very severe trials, which at last almost, as she said, ruined her health and destroyed her nerves. Attentions were

* THE PRINCE OF WALES TO THE DUKE OF NORFOLK.

"Carlton House, Monday Morning, Jan. 8, 1805.

"MY DEAR DUKE,

"I have seen Lord Hertford, who will call upon you in the course of the day, or, at any rate, before the business is brought before the Committee.

"I am ever, my dear Duke, your very sincere friend,

"GEORGE P."

required from her towards Lady Hertford herself, even when most aware of her superior influence over the Prince."

Returning now to the 10th of May, when the debate came on, we find that the Prince had actually sent the pliant Sheridan to his friend Fox to dissuade him from taking part in the matter. But Fox, ever manly, straightforward, and independent, sent the following reply, after stating that he was committed to the cause, from having presented a Catholic petition. He says:

"Now, therefore, any discussion on *this* part of the subject would be too late; but I will fairly own, that, if it were not, I could not be dissuaded from doing the public act, which, of all others, it will give me the greatest satisfaction and pride to perform. No past event in my political life ever did, and no future one ever can, give me such pleasure.

"I am sure you know how painful it would be to me to disobey any command of his Royal Highness's, or even to act in any manner that might be in the slightest degree contrary to his wishes, and, therefore, I am not sorry that your intimation came too late. I shall endeavour to see the Prince to-day; but if I should fail, pray take care that he knows how things stand before we meet at dinner, lest any conversation there should appear to come upon him by surprise."*

There were "opportunists" then, as now, who looked to a convenient mode of shelving a question without sacrificing principle, as will be seen from what next occurred.

"Soon after the return of Mr. Pitt to office," says Mr. Wallace in his "History," "the following semi-official announcement appeared in a journal devoted to the Prince, and the known vehicle of party squibs and political notifications by Sheridan. 'The leading members of both (Fox and Grenville) Oppositions have declared themselves decidedly in favour of Catholic Emancipation, the personal friends of an illustrious personage alone excepted.' A second paragraph appeared in the same paper only a few days before the discussion of the question. 'The Irish Catholic question, we have reason to believe, will not for the present, at least, be brought under parliamentary discussion. Mr. Fox, we understand, is disposed to concede to the public opinion as to the inexpediency of moving it at this time; and it is not improbable that Lord Grenville may also relax so far from his prejudices as to yield to the more discreet judgment of an illustrious personage, who, although he continues to approve the measure of emancipation, deprecates this polemical enquiry at so momentous a period.'"

* Moore, "Life of Sheridan," ii. 333.

All this shows what suspicions there were of the change having taken place in the Prince's views.

By the death of Mr. Pitt, which occurred on the morning of January 24th, 1806, the long-deferred change in the Prince's fortune was at last to arrive, and his old friend and partisan, Mr. Fox, was now in power. It was unfortunate, however, that at such a time the old warmth of friendship should have abated, and that the Prince, through the agency of his henchman Sheridan, should have been making advances even during the last ministry to Mr. Addington. The first direct communication from Lord Grenville and Mr. Fox was received by Lord Sidmouth on the 29th:

"In consequence of a note received this morning," wrote Lord Sidmouth, "from Lord Grenville and Mr. Fox, I am to see them to-day; but a connection with them will not result from it unless I have a perfect conviction that it would be advantageous to the country, and honourable to myself."

A few days later he wrote to "Brother Hiley" the following amusing communication, by which it will be seen how admirably the family were provided for:

"Hiley has, I believe, explained to you how and by whom the overture was made to me.* Lord Grenville and Mr. Fox were nearly inundated by the pretensions which poured in from their respective connexions; and I was, therefore, as moderate as I could be without unbecoming concession or sacrifice. I have laid a strong claim for you, which was readily admitted, to a situation of adequate importance whenever a vacancy may take place. For Hiley the joint paymastership is promised; and Vansittart is to return to his former station at the Treasury (at his own request), if his Majesty will dispense with the punctilio arising from his rank as a Privy Councillor, which I think very questionable."

It was curious, too, to find him about this time warmly uniting with the head of the "centre" party, Lord Grenville.

"As early as the 23rd of January" (when Mr. Pitt was *in extremis*), "Mr. Sheridan told him by note that 'he had been commanded to have a confidential communication with him, and requested permission to wait upon him at Richmond Park for that purpose.'"

What inspired this communication is indicated in a letter which Lord St. Vincent addressed to Lord Sidmouth on the 25th of January: "The Prince of Wales came to me at five o'clock, while I was dressing, and desired I would lose no time in giving you information that the ministry was entirely broken

* From the Prince of Wales, through Mr. Sheridan.

up, and that the King meant to send for Lord Grenville. . . . From all that passed, it appears your moderation has produced a good effect upon the new and old Opposition, amongst whom Windham is the most violent." The next morning, January 26th, Mr. Sheridan was again commanded to write to appoint an interview. Two other notes shortly afterwards arrived from the same party, in the last of which, dated January 29th, he stated, "that he had something to communicate to Lord Sidmouth from the Prince and Mr. Fox."

Mr. Grey Bennett, in his MS. Diary, writes: "Lord Aberdare told me that the Dukes of York and Cumberland, who told him, went to announce death of Pitt to King, who tears and said, 'This will be my death-blow!' When Grenville sent for Mr. Fox, the King required him to sign a paper in which he claimed right of refusing or accepting any plan of Cabinet. Lord Grenville and Fox said of course that this was unnecessary, as it was his constitutional right. This showed King's alarm. . . . Fox, at his first interview, made a speech, in which he said he had been misrepresented, and yielded to no man in attachment to constitution for his Majesty. The King agitated, and said: 'I believe you, Mr. Fox. I know you to be a man of honour, and thank you for what you have said.' Lord Grenville told Lord Derby that the King expressed himself much pleased with the kind treatment he had received; and that he had not expected it."*

* From these curious and entertaining notes, kept during a number of years, I propose taking large extracts during the course of this work. They fill several volumes, and are full of parliamentary and other sketches, gossip, and bits of "secret history," and I am indebted for them to Mr. W. J. Fitzpatrick, the author of the "Life of Dr. Doyle."

CHAPTER XXXVI.

1806.

WE are now arrived at one of the most singular episodes that has been connected with the royal family. The disagreements of the Prince and Princess of Wales had long passed from public observation, and it was assumed that the ill-assorted pair had settled down into a state of decent incompatibility and indifference. But about the summer of 1806 strange rumours got abroad of scandals at Blackheath, and that a secret tribunal had sat in judgment on the Princess. A committee of noblemen had actually tried her in her absence, brought her servants before them, and accepted their testimony without its being tested on her behalf. It is enough to state the terms of this truly Venetian proceeding, which was the first stage in the persecution that was for fourteen years to assail this unfortunate lady.

It is not necessary to go into the unpleasant details of what was called "the delicate investigation," or indeed of any of the other proceedings against her. A very simple statement will show what the character of the whole affair was. It will be seen that the Princess, becoming careless and reckless, had, with her usual indiscreetness, adopted strangers as though they were old friends. She had always an extraordinary fancy for children, and indeed up to her death she adopted some half-a-dozen, and was scarcely ever without a child of low degree in her train. This hobby, or folly—for such it was—notoriously gave rise to stories and speculations.

It was to be lamented indeed that, with the King and nation on her side, she could not have behaved with ordinary discretion among her neighbours. It seems that the Princess, now living

at Blackheath, had heard that Lady Douglas—her neighbour, an utter stranger to her—had been confined, and introduced herself on the occasion. On this, an extravagant intimacy followed, which continued for some years, until the end of 1804, when the lady was suddenly dismissed and her letters returned unopened. Much exasperated at this treatment, Lady Douglas soon after declared that she had received anonymous letters and drawings of a scandalous character. On which, her husband threatened that he would expose the Princess, and informed the Duke of Kent that he would do so. The latter interposed, and begged that the matter would not be mentioned, as it would annoy the King. It should be noted that at this stage it was merely “a private squabble” between the parties, the Douglasses complaining of the Princess’s slanders, and requiring redress. In November, 1805, the Duke of Sussex appeared on the scene, and waited on the Prince of Wales with a new and startling communication that Sir John had told him some facts relative to the Princess, and which “might affect the royal succession.”

This must have been welcome information to the Prince, who felt himself bound by “duty” to move in the matter. On this Sir John and Lady Douglas made declarations before the Duke of Sussex at Greenwich Park, dated December 3rd, 1805. Lady Douglas’s was virtually the “act of accusation,” and it was of extraordinary length. It set out such charges that Lord Thurlow, to whom the Prince submitted the papers, called in the assistance of Romilly, now the Prince’s legal friend; two men likely to come to an honest opinion on the matter, even though Thurlow was now the Prince’s private adviser on every important subject. Colonel Macmahon and Lord Moira, two of the Prince’s familiars, were also busy in the case. It may be said here that, when such a matter was brought to the Prince’s notice, he could not avoid taking the matter up and investigating it.

Lord Thurlow’s opinion, expressed with his usual coarse energy, was that “he did not believe Lady Douglas’s account.” There was “no composition,” he said, “in her narrative—i.e. it did not hang together; no dates; that some parts were grossly improbable; that the Princess could hardly have said such things when he first knew her, but she might have altered. But to be sure it was a strange thing to take a beggar’s child, but a few days old, and adopt it as her own; but that, however, the Princess had strange whims.”

Upon the whole, his opinion was there was no evidence on which to found action, and the Prince must wait and see what facts would come to light in future. This was a sound and correct judgment. He then advised that evidence should be

collected respecting her general behaviour, and suggested that a skilled practitioner should be employed.

Thus, when we add the verdict of the later commission to the declarations of the Prince's advisers, it is clear that the Princess was acquitted almost as soon as the charge was made.

This statement of Lady Douglas—filling some sixty octavo pages—is the most extraordinary document conceivable, and seems rather the rambling incoherence of some of those wild women who come into court as plaintiffs in strange and romantic trials, than that of a sober accuser. In this she raked together conversations of the most extraordinary kind—coarse and imprudent, which probably did take place. A single passage shows the spirit of the whole: "I now received, by the twopenny post, a long anonymous letter, written by this restless, mischievous person, the Princess of Wales, in which, in language which any one who had ever heard her speak, would have known to be hers, she called me all kinds of names—impudent, silly, wretched, ungrateful, and illiteral (meaning illiterate); she tells me to take that, and it will mend my ill temper, etc. etc. etc., and says she is a person high in this government, and has often an opportunity of (*sic*) freely with his Majesty; and she thinks my conduct authorises her to tell him of, and that she is my only true and 'integer friend.' Such is the spirit of this foreigner, which would have disgraced a housemaid to have written."

Seeing that the case had broken down, it was determined to make one; and at this point it is difficult to acquit the Prince and his advisers. The solicitor to the Douglasses, this Lowten, was appointed to "get up" facts; and the amiable Romilly, who had declined to advise on this part of the business, was talked over into himself examining Lady Douglas. All the Prince's servants were "got at," and two—Bidgood and Cole—detailed stories of familiarities with visitors. On the truth of these and other charges it is impossible to decide; rather, it is beyond the province of a work like the present to decide. To this and the later investigations may be applied a development of the acute remark of Mary Lamb: "They talk of the Queen's guilt. I should not think the better of her if she were what is called innocent." But there can be no doubt that the whole was a most improper, unfair, and unjust proceeding.

More than five months were consumed in raking together these accusations and trying to strengthen them. Lord Grenville, Mr. Fox, and the Prince's friends were now in office. These were honourable and upright men, but it is certainly remarkable that no official action should have been taken till they were in power. But Fox was dying, and the papers were at last submitted to her

friend the King, who gave his consent to a commission of inquiry, naming, on May 29, 1806, Lord Erskine, the Chancellor, Lord Grenville, Lord Spencer, and Lord Ellenborough for the purpose. There was a certain impropriety in choosing Erskine, who had been consulted by Romilly on the papers, and who was one of the Prince's most devoted followers. Romilly assisted at the inquiry, and may be said to have been conducting counsel against the Princess; but his presence was a guarantee of impartiality. On the 7th of June it began. Six of the servants were brought from her house without notice to the Princess. The Duke of Kent communicated to her this resolution, and she said, with dignity, they were welcome to examine all. "The result," says Romilly, "was such as left a perfect conviction on my mind, and I believe on the minds of the four lords, that the boy in question is the son of Sophia Austin. The evidence of all the servants as to the general conduct of the Princess was extremely favourable to her royal highness, and Lady Douglas's account was contradicted in many very important particulars." This from the counsel for the prosecution is remarkable testimony. In fact the refutation of the charge was complete, and Lady Douglas's account was not only "contradicted"—the amiable word of Romilly—but seemed to furnish ground for an indictment for perjury.

On July 14th, 1806, the report was furnished to the King. They completely acquitted her of the charge of being mother of the boy, whose parentage they traced in the most convincing manner. But they added this singular censure: "We do not, however, feel ourselves at liberty, much as we should wish it, to close our report here. Besides the allegations of the pregnancy and delivery of the Princess, those declarations, on the whole of which your Majesty has been pleased to command us to inquire and report, contain, as we have already remarked, other particulars respecting her royal highness, such as must, especially considering her exalted rank and station, necessarily give occasion to very unfavourable interpretations, particularly from the examinations of Robert Bidgood, William Cole, Frances Lloyd, and Mrs. Lisle. Your Majesty will perceive that several strong circumstances of this description have been positively sworn to by witnesses who cannot, in our judgment, be suspected of any unfavourable bias, and whose veracity, in this respect, we have seen no ground to question. On the precise bearing and effects of the facts thus appearing it is not for us to decide; these we submit to your Majesty's wisdom; but we conceive it to be our duty to report on this part of the inquiry as distinctly as on the former facts, that, as on the one hand the facts of pregnancy and delivery are

to our minds satisfactorily disproved, so on the other hand we think that the circumstances to which we now refer, particularly those stated to have passed between her royal highness and Captain Manby, must be credited until they shall receive some decisive contradiction, and, if true, are justly entitled to the most serious consideration."

It is sufficient to quote these words, to show their injustice, for how were the charges alluded to to receive "some decided contradiction," unless opportunity was given? They also attempted to vindicate the Prince from having had any share in the matter; and it must be said that the Princess generously joined in this view.* He is certainly entitled to indulgence in this respect; for when the affidavits were laid before him, he consulted Lord Thurlow, who advised him to consult his father's ministers, on which the Prince asked Lord Grenville: "What am I to do?" "I know what I must do," was the reply.

But during the investigation his favourite, Lord Moira, was busy examining witnesses for himself, and tried to intimidate one Edmeades, a doctor, who flatly contradicted one of the servants, by examining him in presence of a magistrate. The real view to take would seem to be this: That as the main charge had so completely broken down, it looked as though the rest had been "got up" as a supplemental accusation, and would naturally share the fate of the first.

All that followed was of a piece with the rest. After the process was concluded, the Princess was kept for months waiting a decision. It was not until the January of 1807 that the King was allowed to decide on the question.

An unfortunate and unusual accident now occurred, which might be considered of evil omen. Driving with Miss Cholmondeley and Lady Sheffield in September, near Leatherhead, the carriage was overturned; the Princess herself was much contused, but the young lady was killed on the spot.

As she was not allowed to defend herself at the trial, it was determined that this should be done now. The Princess, however, had important friends to defend her, and none more warm and eager at this time than the late Chancellor, Lord Eldon. He was in constant communication with her, and advised and supported her through these trials. It was to him that she complained of her papers being stolen, and later of the monstrous affront that she was forced to keep in her service the very servants who had made criminal charges against her.

But a more valuable ally was Mr. Perceval, afterwards minister, who had now become her ardent champion. "To the tower or

* As she told Lord Minto. "Life of Sir G. Elliot," iii. 388.

scaffold in such a cause," he had exclaimed enthusiastically to Lady Malmesbury, as they returned together from a visit to the Princess. The service he did her consisted in drawing up a statement of her case. It has always been considered one of the most masterly and powerful defences ever written, and indeed she was always fortunate in having such friends, whose adroit management nearly brought this and other incidents of her persecution to a successful issue, in the face of terrible odds. In this task he was mainly assisted by Mr. Plumer and Sir Vicary Gibbs, later so notorious for his prosecutions; but the chief credit must be given to Perceval.

In October she writes thus gratefully to Lord Eldon:

THE PRINCESS OF WALES TO LORD ELDON.

"Blackheath, Oct. 13th, 1806.

"The Princess of Wales, with the most grateful sense, is most sincerely obliged to Lord Eldon for his kind inquiry through Lady Sheffield.

"Her body as well as her mind have naturally much suffered from the last melancholy catastrophe, having lost in so short a time, and so unexpectedly, a most kind and affectionate brother and a sincere friend. The afflictions which Providence has sent so recently to her are very severe trials of patience and resignation, and nothing than strong feelings of religion and piety could with any sort of fortitude carry the Princess's dejected mind through this. She puts her only trust in Providence, which has so kindly protected her in various ways since she is in this kingdom.

"The Princess also has the pleasure to inform his Lordship that the Queen has twice made inquiry, by Lady Ilchester, through Lady Sheffield, about the Princess's bodily and mental state. The Duchess of York, through her Lady to Lady Sheffield, and the Duke of Cambridge, in the same way, made their inquiries. The Duke of Kent wrote himself to the Princess, which of course she answered herself. The Duke of Cumberland, who has twice been with the Princess after the melancholy event took place, desired her to announce, herself, to his Majesty the unexpected event of the death of the Prince Hereditary of Brunswick. She followed his advice, and the letter was sent through Lady Sheffield to Colonel Taylor. The answer was kind from his Majesty, and full of feeling of interest for the severe loss she sustained in her brother."

By October 3rd it was ready for presentation to the King. "It was a matter of much delicacy, as it was difficult to avoid the

appearance of impeaching the credit of those who conducted the inquiry, which was dangerous." He wrote to Mr. Rose: "The report was so framed that she could not acquiesce under it in silence without admitting its truth; and that, in fact, there was evidently so much disposition to be hostile to her manifested in the whole course of the proceeding, that looking forward to a new reign, there could be no possible security for her being permitted to hold her rank or station in this country, but from the existence of a strong sentiment in her favour throughout the kingdom; and that, therefore, her letter to the King should be so prepared, that if published, it should have the effect of producing rather than checking that sentiment. The copies of this letter, undoubtedly, unless it should be determined to publish it, ought to be kept very secret; but as soon as I conveniently can, I will endeavour to procure you a sight of one of them, as I really shall be very anxious to know your opinion upon it."

The admirable vindication was presented to the King early in October. The effect of reading it must have been complete and irresistible. As Lord Colchester said: "The answer renders the evidence on which the Lords have relied very incredible, from its inconsistency and absurdity."* But no notice was taken of it. After waiting nine weeks, she once more appealed to the King; but still no answer came. The fact was the Cabinet felt themselves in a serious difficulty, owing to the awkwardness of two of their members having been concerned in the matter. Then arrived piteous letters from her father and mother, who acutely felt the disgrace, imploring a speedy decision in the case of their unfortunate child, but without result.

Not until January 28th, 1807, did she receive a letter from the King, announcing that the ministry had considered the papers and agreed as to report; that no further steps need be taken, save so far as it might be advisable to consider whether Lady Douglas should be prosecuted. He was advised it was no longer necessary for him to decline receiving the Princess into his royal presence. That the King saw with satisfaction the decided proof of the falsehood of the accusation of pregnancy and delivery, brought forward against her by Lady Douglas. But that there were other circumstances against her which he regarded with serious concern, and he desired and expected that such conduct might in future be observed by the Princess, as might fully justify those marks of paternal regard and affection which he always wished to show to every part of the royal family.

"Other circumstances stated against her!" This extraordinary phrase is her vindication. For if the accusations of the

* "Diary," ii. 106.

servants were to be accepted as true, then she was surely unfitted to be received at Court ; if false, she did not deserve the reproof !

The Princess accepted it as it was, and wrote to be allowed to visit at Windsor ; but the King said London would be more convenient. But now the Prince interposed, and on seeing the strength of her case, declared that he would put it into the hands of his lawyers, to make a reply. The King was induced to declare that he would put off receiving her until this was done—i.e. *sine die*. In another masterly paper, also drawn up by Perceval, she urged, with irresistible logic, that the tribunal to which the Prince had appealed had declared that “there was no longer any reason why his Majesty should not receive her. Why, then, was she not received months before, since but for this “cruel, unjust, and unreasonable interposition of the Prince?” She then renewed her defence. Her position was logical ; for the Prince had now come forward in person : hitherto it had been the proceeding of a neutral tribunal.

Some extracts from this powerful indictment of the Princess of Wales may be given here :

“There may be circumstances disclosed, manifesting a degree of condescension and familiarity in my behaviour and conduct, which, in the opinions of many, may be considered as not sufficiently guarded, dignified, and reserved. Circumstances, however, which my foreign education and foreign habits misled me to think, in the humble and retired situation in which it was my fate to live, and where I had no relation, no equal, no friend to advise me, were wholly free from offence. But when they have been dragged forward, from the scenes of private life, in a grave proceeding on a charge of high treason and adultery, they seem to derive a colour and character from the nature of the charge which they are brought forward to support.

“In making that determination, however, it will not escape your Majesty to consider, that the conduct which does or does not become a married woman, materially depends upon what is or is not known by her to be agreeable to her husband. His pleasure and happiness ought unquestionably to be her law ; and his approbation the most favourite object of her pursuit. Different characters of men require different modes of conduct in their wives ; but when a wife can no longer be capable of perceiving, from time to time, what is agreeable or offensive to her husband, when her conduct can no longer contribute to his happiness, no longer hope to be rewarded by his approbation, surely to examine that conduct by the standard of what ought, in general, to be the

conduct of a married woman, is altogether unreasonable and unjust.

“What then is my case? Your Majesty will do me the justice to remark that, in the letter of the Prince of Wales, there is not the most distant surmise, that crime, that vice, that indelicacy of any description, gave occasion to his determination; and all the tales of infamy and discredit, which the inventive malice of my enemies has brought forward on these charges, have their date, years and years after the period to which I am now alluding. What then, let me repeat the question, is my case? After the receipt of the above letter, and in about two years from my arrival in this country, I had the misfortune entirely to lose the support, the countenance, the protection of my husband—I was banished, as it were, into a sort of humble retirement, at a distance from him, and almost estranged from the whole of the royal family. I had no means of having recourse, either for society or advice, to those from whom my inexperience could have best received the advantages of the one, and with whom I could, most becomingly, have enjoyed the comforts of the other.

“Your Majesty’s confidential servants say: ‘They agree in the opinions of the four lords;’ and they say this, ‘after the fullest consideration of my observations, and of the affidavits which were annexed to them.’ Some of these opinions, your Majesty will recollect, are, that ‘William Cole, Fanny Lloyd, Robert Bidgood, and Mrs. Lisle, are witnesses who cannot,’ in the judgment of the four lords, ‘be suspected of any unfavourable bias;’ and ‘whose veracity, in this respect, they had seen no ground to question;’ and ‘that the circumstances to which they speak, particularly as relating to Captain Manby, must be credited until they are decisively contradicted.’ Am I then to understand your Majesty’s confidential servants to mean, that they agree with the four noble lords in these opinions? Am I to understand, that after having read, with the fullest consideration, the observations which I have offered to your Majesty; after having seen William Cole there proved to have submitted himself, five times at least, to private, unauthorised, voluntary examination by Sir John Douglas’s solicitor, for the express purpose of confirming the statement of Lady Douglas (of that Lady Douglas whose statement and deposition they are convinced to be so malicious and false, that they propose to institute such prosecution against her as your Majesty’s law officers may advise, upon a reference, now at length, after six months from the detection of that malice and falsehood, intended to be made)—after having seen this William Cole submitting to such repeated voluntary examinations for such a purpose, and although he was all that

time a servant on my establishment, and eating my bread, yet never once communicating to me that such examinations were going on—am I to understand, that your Majesty's confidential servants agree with the four lords in thinking that he cannot, under such circumstances, be suspected of unfavourable bias?—that after having had pointed out to them the direct flat contradiction between the same William Cole and Fanny Lloyd, they nevertheless agree to think them both (though in direct contradiction to each other, yet both) witnesses, whose veracity they see no ground to question?

“Was it then noble, was it generous, was it manly, was it just, in your Majesty's confidential servants, instead of fairly admitting the injustice which had been—inadvertently and unintentionally, no doubt—done to me by the four noble lords in their report, upon the evidence of these witnesses, to state to your Majesty that they agree with these noble lords in their opinion, though they cannot, it seems, go the length of agreeing any longer to withhold the advice which restores me to your Majesty's presence?

“They agree in the opinion that the facts or allegations, though stated in preliminary examinations, carried on in the absence of the parties interested, must be credited till decisively contradicted, and deserve the most serious consideration. They read, with the fullest consideration, the contradiction which I have tendered to them; they must have known that no other sort of contradiction could, by possibility, from the nature of things, have been offered upon such subjects; they do not question the truth, they do not point out the insufficiency of the contradiction, but in loose, general, indefinite terms, referring to my answer, consisting, as it does, of above two hundred written pages, and coupling it with those examinations (which they admit establish nothing against an absent party), they advise your Majesty, that ‘there appear many circumstances of conduct, which could not be regarded by your Majesty without serious concern.’

“And here, Sire, your Majesty will graciously permit me to notice the hardship of the advice which has suggested to your Majesty to convey to me this reproof. I complain not so much for what it does, as for what it does not, contain: I mean the absence of all particular mention of what it is that is the object of their blame.

“For my future conduct, Sire, impressed with every sense of gratitude for all former kindness, I shall be bound unquestionably, by sentiment as well as duty, to study your Majesty's pleasure. Any advice which your Majesty may wish to give to me in respect of any particulars of my conduct, I shall be bound and be anxious to obey as my law. But I must trust that your Majesty will

point out to me the particulars, which may happen to displease you, and which you may wish to have altered.

"Surrounded, as it is now proved that I have been for years, by domestic spies, your Majesty must, I trust, feel convinced that if I had been guilty, there could not have been wanting evidence to have proved my guilt. And that these spies have been obliged to have resort to their own invention for the support of the charge, is the strongest demonstration that the truth, undisguised and correctly represented, could furnish them with no handle against me. And when I consider the nature and malignity of that conspiracy, which I feel confident I have completely detected and exposed, I cannot but think of that detection with the liveliest gratitude as the special blessing of Providence, who, by confounding the machinations of my enemies, has enabled me to find, in the excess and extravagance of their malice, in the very weapons which they fabricated and sharpened for my destruction, the sufficient guard to my innocence, and the effectual means of my justification and defence.

"I trust therefore, Sire, that I may now close this long letter in confidence that many days will not elapse before I shall receive from your Majesty that assurance that my just requests may be so completely granted, as may render it possible for me (which nothing else can) to avoid the painful disclosure to the world of all the circumstances of that injustice, and of those unmerited sufferings which these proceedings, in the manner in which they have been conducted, have brought upon me.

"I remain, Sire,

"With every sentiment of gratitude,

"Your Majesty's most dutiful,

"Most submissive Daughter-in-law,

"Subject and Servant,

"(Signed) C. P.

"Montague House, February 16, 1807."

Such was this admirable defence. More effective, however, was the alarming declaration that she would lay her case before the public. Still a month more went by. The ministry was in its last agony. "The Book"*—the name it was long known by

* One Edwards, of Crane Court, Fleet Street, was the printer, and a Member of Parliament was "confidential assistant," or "reader." We may presume the proof-sheets were sent to an ostensible editor, and returned in same fashion. The whole impression, except two copies, was delivered at Mr. Perceval's house. These two copies were, later, destined to cause much embarrassment and annoyance. See Wilks' "Memoirs of Queen Caroline," i. 261, a work containing many curious and authentic details.

Another legend ran that it had been printed at a press set up in Lord

—was actually printed, and five thousand copies were got ready to be launched on the town, under circumstances of extraordinary secrecy and mystery.

At last, irritated by these delays, the Princess wrote to the King, naming a particular Monday, after which the bolt would certainly be launched. Suddenly, the "Ministry of all the Talents," collapsed—turned out in the unceremonious fashion so often described. It is not unlikely that this very business and its embarrassment helped the other causes of the fall.

Lord Holland throws some curious light on the contending interests that were at work and causing the long delay. He is inclined to believe that it was at the suggestion of the King that the Commissioners were named. Mr. Fox excused himself on the score of his health, business, and connections with the Prince. The report was evidently, he said, a compromise. The King adroitly referred the Princess's appeal to him to the Cabinet, saying he would be guided by them. Some were inclined to be severe. Lords Sidmouth and Grenville "thought that after so broad an acquittal upon the main charge, we would exceed our powers by touching on levities, and wished to decline giving an opinion at all. The King perceived our embarrassment, and dexterously insisted on an opinion. Then Windham sent in a separate minute acquitting her altogether, which was never made known." The Prince, Lord Holland adds, was dissatisfied with the report, and declared that he was not bound by it. He called on the Cabinet to say so, and acquit him of all complicity in the business. Lord Holland pressed that this should be done. On the last day the Cabinet met "a cold testimony to his conduct" was despatched to the King. This is a curious proof of his shrewdness, for some years later, when it was necessary to inquire into the Princess's conduct, this recognition of his having had no share in the business fairly gave him a ground for reopening it.

Now came her triumph. Never was an injured woman so happily rescued. Here were all her friends and champions in office—Lord Eldon, Mr. Canning, and Perceval. Within two or three weeks a minute of Council was drawn up, in which it was set out that:

"After the most deliberate consideration, however, of the evidence which has been brought before the Commissioners, and

Eldon's house. Mr. Canning seems to have disapproved of the book, and when Mr. Perceval sent him a copy (and he seems to have shown copies to Mr. Abbott and others) he replied that he was sorry it had been printed; that it was certain to be published; and that, in order that he might not be held responsible, he returned his copy.

of the previous examinations, as well as of the answer and observations which have been submitted to your Majesty upon them, they feel it necessary to declare their decided concurrence in the clear and unanimous opinion of the Commissioners, confirmed by all your Majesty's late confidential servants, that the two main charges alleged against her Royal Highness the Princess of Wales, of pregnancy and delivery, are completely disproved; and they further submit to your Majesty their unanimous opinion that all other particulars of conduct brought in accusation against her royal highness, to which the character of criminality can be ascribed, are satisfactorily contradicted, or rest upon evidence of such a nature, and which was given under such circumstances as render it, in the judgment of your Majesty's confidential servants, undeserving of credit."

In another minute they recommended that she should have apartments in one of the palaces, and that she should be treated in a manner worthy of her high position.

Such was the ignominious repulse of this first organised attack upon the character and honour of the Princess; and the Prince of Wales had now the mortification of defeat to add a poignancy to his dislike.

In the meantime—to anticipate a little—Mr. Fox had died, and the disappearance of the Prince's chief friend and ally may have been connected with the decisions taken in her case.

Her friend, Lord Eldon, went specially to the King, and warned him of the dangers that would ensue if Mr. Perceval published "The Book," and there can be little doubt but that such intimation, coming from "my dear old master's devoted friend," would have secured the result, even had her friends not come into power.* The threatened publication was of course suspended by the very terms of the menace, as the end was gained. It was often made a subject of reproach to Mr. Perceval and Lord Eldon that, when they had gained their aim and attained power, they found it convenient to abandon their advocacy of the Princess; and their suppression of "The Book" is put forward as a proof. The fact was, the "incident was closed," as the French say. The object had been attained. Unfortunately, too, the Princess, from this time forth, instead of profiting by this narrow escape, seems to have grown reckless, and herself was to furnish sufficient grounds for the desertion of her best friends.

This episode may be closed by the singular meeting that took place some months later between the parties to this quarrel. "Soon after the entrance of the Queen into the drawing-room,

* Lord Eldon assured Lord Grey (who told Romilly) that his visit was for this purpose.—Romilly, iii, 104.

the Prince arrived, and conversed with her for some time. About three o'clock the Princess of Wales came, elegantly attired. After complimenting her Majesty and the Princesses, she entered into conversation with the Prince; during which there was a profound silence in the room; all eyes were fixed upon them. But nothing appeared beyond the forms of politeness; it was thence conjectured that further connection was impossible."

CHAPTER XXXVII.

1806—1807.

WITH the death of Pitt, and the arrival of his friend Fox at the plenitude of power, the Prince might fairly look for a welcome change and a share in its enjoyment. We have seen that he was partly instrumental in introducing Lord Sidmouth, and seems to have been consulted in the arrangements. But Fox was near his last sickness and enjoyed but a brief snatch of office.

The Prince of Wales now set off on a sort of progress, leaving London on the 25th of August for Bushy Park, taking with him, by appointment, the Duke of Clarence on an extensive tour. They were attended by Colonel Lee and Major Bloomfield. Their royal highnesses slept that night at Benson, Oxfordshire, and passed through Oxford. They then proceeded to Blenheim, and drove through the park. The royal brothers next proceeded to the Earl of Guildford's, at Wroxton Abbey, where they dined. A round of entertainments was provided for the amusement of the guests during their stay, among which a play was performed. On their route to Ragley, the Marquis of Hertford's, they stopped at the Lion Inn, in Stratford, where the volunteers assembled to receive them. The Prince of Wales was waited upon by the mayor and corporation, who presented a loyal address to his royal highness, accompanied with an elegant box, adorned with an appropriate inscription, made of the celebrated mulberry-tree planted by the immortal Warwickshire bard. While at Ragley, the royal brothers visited Warwick and Warwick Castle. After leaving Ragley, they passed through Shrewsbury on their way to Ross Hall, the seat of Cecil Forester, Esq., M.P.;

they were escorted by a detachment of the Shrewsbury Yeomanry. Their royal highnesses, leaving Ross Hall, proceeded to Loton, the seat of Sir Robert Leighton, Bart., and from thence to Trentham Hall, on a visit to the Marquis of Stafford.

Addresses were presented from various corporations, etc., and most graciously answered. The volunteers who turned out were noticed with great and peculiar condescension by the royal tourists. The next visit was paid to Liverpool; to which place they went from Knowsley in a coach and six of the Earl of Derby's, followed by twenty other carriages. On their arrival they were received by the Duke of Gloucester, the Dragoon Guards, Devon Militia, Liverpool Volunteers, etc. After the royal brothers had inspected the docks and various other establishments, they partook of an elegant dinner provided by the Mayor, and in the evening returned to Knowsley. The entertainment cost the Corporation of Liverpool not less than £10,000. The number of persons who flocked to Liverpool upon the occasion was immense. Such was this gay progress.

Within a few months Fox had followed his great rival to the grave. The Prince was at Brighton when his illness had grown critical, and hurried to his bedside. Fox had rallied a little after the operation of tapping, and was encouraged by the Prince to hope for recovery. The other shook his head, and said the relief "only made room for fresh attack." That was the last time they saw each other. It was remarked, however, with some surprise, that the Prince did not attend his funeral, though this was said to have been owing to the interference of the King.

Not long before the Prince had lost another friend and useful favourite, one of his most faithful servants, Admiral Payne, "treasurer of Greenwich Hospital, warden of the Stannaries, and auditor-general to his master.* The Prince seems to have had a deep regard for him, though, as we have seen, it was somewhat cooled by his lack of subserviency on the occasion of the Prince's marriage. The loss of Fox really marked an era in the Prince's life, for though his influence had been clearly waning, and was but precarious, there was no one left with equal power. Lord Grey's son, indeed, is inclined to accept, *au sérieux*, that sort of impulsive letter, which the Prince would deliver himself of at seasons of emotion, and appeals to one addressed to

* The world, we are told, called him "Jack Payne," the Prince "honest Jack Payne," and had his portrait painted for Carlton House. The Prince's deputy at the funeral attended in a coach-and-six. His own librarian and chaplain, Dr. Clarke, read the service, and he lies in St. Margaret's, Westminster. His place had been already taken by another favourite, who became far better known, Colonel MacMahon.

Mr. Grey in proof of the stanchness of the Prince's opinion, as well as friendship for his father. But such have little value, as a few months was to show.

THE PRINCE OF WALES TO MR. GREY.

“Knowsley, Sept. 18, 1806.

“MY DEAR GREY,

“I am hardly in state to write at all, much less to answer your very friendly letter. As to my feelings it would be superfluous to say anything, as they exceed all belief, and all power of description. I consider the loss we have sustained as incalculable to the country, and irreparable to all his friends, and to myself in particular. Having, from the earliest period of my life, when I first entered a political career, looked up to no one but to Fox; having been constantly and invariably attached to him and to his principles; having trodden that path which he marked out for me; and having been guided through it by the support of his hand; I do candidly acknowledge to you, that the difference is so prodigious, the loss so immense, that my thoughts are quite bewildered, and that as yet I have not been able to collect my ideas so as to bring them to any one point.

“As to Lord Grenville, for whom I entertain the very highest personal regard and friendship, I felt quite confident that you would find him everything that could be wished or expected from a strictly honourable and great-minded man; which opinion I have long entertained of him, and which induced me so anxiously to wish to bring him and our departed and for-ever-to-be-lamented friend together, and to frame and consolidate that union in which I afterwards so fortunately succeeded. But as to ourselves, my friend, the old and steady adherents and friends of Fox, we have but one line to pursue, one course to steer—to stick together, to remain united, and to prove by our conduct, in our steady and unshaken adherence to those principles which we imbibed from Fox when living, that now (though alas he is no more!) we were not merely nominally his friends, but that we are not unworthy of him, and that his memory will for ever live in our hearts. In saying this, all I mean to convey is, what my sentiments are as to the line which it behoves us to trace, and abstractedly attaches to us, as the old, firm, and uniform adherents of Fox.

“As to my opinions, if I can form any at the present moment, and to which I profess myself perfectly unequal, it does appear to me that everything ought to be done which can be done, for every possible reason, to convince and to substantiate to our own

nation, as well as to foreign Powers, that such is the respect, such the regard, that the present ministers not only feel individually as men, but collectively as a Government, for the memory of our dear departed friend, and such the estimation in which they hold his principles, and the reverence with which they view the great and enlightened system which he had prepared, and was so indefatigably pursuing; and which no one was able to frame but himself; and which there is no doubt he would have successfully brought to the desired point; that they are resolutely resolved, steadily and firmly to adhere to, and to follow up those ideas, those views, those plans, which were laid down by his masterly hand, and which line will be attended, I have no doubt, with the happiest consequences, as it will infallibly be the means of establishing confidence at home, as well as all over the Continent.

"The simplest and most natural mode, it does, I confess to you, appear to me of effecting this in the first instance (subject always to better and wiser opinions than mine, and subject also to any subsequent arrangements that it might be thought necessary or advisable to make) would be, without any delay, not to make any change whatever just at the present moment, but to put the seals for the Foreign Department into the hands of Holland. You know Holland too well to make it necessary to say one word about him; but as far as I can allow or induce myself to view anything that tends to business under our present most distressing situation, this is what appears to me to be the most correct, as well as desirable measure, and it cannot but be attended with universal satisfaction, and peculiarly so to all Fox's old friends, and, though last, most singularly grateful to myself.

"With respect to what you so delicately state to me, my dear Grey, concerning yourself, as you know me to detest all flattery and all prolixity of expression, I shall merely say that the regard and admiration with which I have viewed your talents, and the friendship which has always subsisted between us, decide my opinion upon the propriety and wisdom of those duties which rested upon that great and for-ever-to-be-lamented man, devolving upon you. It remains only for me to assure you how truly happy I shall be, and what comfort it will afford me, to communicate in the fullest confidence with you, and by every means in my power to aid and strengthen the views and wishes of the Government.

"I am, ever very affectionately yours,

"GEORGE P."

My father (says General Grey) having told the Prince the plan which had been proposed for reorganising the ministry—the

difficulties which interposed—and having alluded to the possible alternative of having to declare to the King that they were unable to form an administration capable of meeting the present crisis, his royal highness wrote in answer as follows :

THE PRINCE OF WALES TO MR. GREY.

[“PRIVATE AND SECRET.”]

“Doncaster, Sept. 22, 1806.

“MY DEAR GREY,

“Although it is now past three in the morning, and that I am quite knocked up with the long journey of this day, I cannot delay writing a few lines in answer to both your letters, the one of which I received at Knowsley this morning previous to my departure, and the other which I have this instant found on my arrival here. I think myself peculiarly fortunate that the cursory view I took in my letter to you of our present situation coincides so entirely with your opinions ; but I must candidly and most confidentially acknowledge to you that it grieves me much that any of Fox’s old friends should, of themselves, think of retiring from their situations at a moment like the present ; as there never was a moment, in my poor opinion, that could so imperiously call upon them to remain in office, were it only by every exertion on their part, to further and bring to bear, as far as lay in their power, that general system, but more especially that system upon the Continent, which the great and powerful mind of our poor friend would soon have effected. I think it is a duty they owe his memory, and a duty they owe to this country, as well as to Europe. For God’s sake talk not to me of such an alternative as you mentioned in the letter which I received from you this morning. I really conceive it would be ruinous in every point that I can view it ; ruinous to the country in the first instance, and ruinous to your own reputations in the second ; and I am certain, were he alive, it would be what he would deprecate more than anything else ; and last of all it would be considered as a miserable copy of the grounds which the last despicable and odious administration took, upon the death of Pitt, for sending in their resignations.

“My dear friend, this is a strange world we live in, and nothing can be done in it without a little temper and a little policy. We must do the best we can, and because we cannot have everything our own way, we must not, therefore, instantly throw up the whole game, and by that means become the tool of others. This would not be consistent with what we owe to our own characters ; to the language we have held ; to the line we

have publicly pursued ; and, last of all, to what we ought never to lose sight of—the precepts we have learnt from Fox, and what I am confident, were he now able to advise, would be his wishes. At the same time that I say this, I desire, my good friend, that you will clearly understand me—that I by no means mean that we should relax, in any one instance, to carry such points as may be necessary to the completion of those great views, nor in any effort that may tend towards the accomplishment of them : though there may be difficulties and delays, still we must not be disheartened, but boldly meet them, and, if it should be necessary, reasonably to submit to them. I should hope that when you mentioned such an alternative to me, you were influenced by the distress under which we were both suffering, and which may mislead the very best judgment. Besides what I have already said, reflect one instant how fatal it would be to me, in this peculiarly delicate and awful moment, to be left in such a situation by all my friends, exposed to the accumulation of distress both public and private. I need not, I am sure, my dear Grey, say more to you than this—only to call upon you to rouse all the energies of your mind—but, proudly and with cool judgment, let us meet whatever may arise, thereby performing, to our best, our duties to the country, as well as those which we owe to the memory of our departed friend.

“ I really am so fatigued that I cannot answer for any inaccuracies you may find in this letter ; but I will answer for my firm and steady adherence to these principles and opinions.

“ I am ever, my dear Grey, most truly yours,
“ GEORGE P.”

It is amusing to find what hopes always filled the Prince's partisans on any news of change. Writes Mr. Grey Bennett :

“ My father told me, September 27, 1806, that when at Alnwick, the Duke of Northumberland had said that upon the death of Mr. Pitt, and during the first plan of the formation of the present administration, Lord Moira passed through Alnwick, being sent for to town from Scotland. As he passed through the town he sent a note to the Duke, expressing his sorrow at not being able, from his anxiety to get forward, to call upon him, but to assure him of his regards, etc., and that, as no administration could be formed without his presence and concurrence, he was obliged to be in town with all speed. Soon after his arrival in London, he wrote again to the Duke, saying that he was kept quite in the dark ; he had been neglected like all the rest of the world ; and that, at last, they had offered him the place of Master

of the Ordnance, with a seat at the Cabinet, which he considered as an insult, and would not have taken, had it not been joined to a promise of the patronage of Scotland. This is a strange mixture of vanity and falsehood. His place is as good as he had any title to expect, and the Scotch patronage was never offered to him. He expected it, and accordingly wrote to the Lord Justice-Clerk, 'Hope' (the gentleman with the ardent mind), to inform him that the patronage would go on in its old channel, that is to say, through him, Lord Melville's friend: so much for Lord Moira, his truth, his sense, and his principles."

To Fox's ministry was now to succeed the "composite" one—that strange mixture of Foxites, Grenvillites, and "Doctors," which, as Moore happily said, was more like the brass of Corinth in the variety of the metals than in their excellence. It of course provided handsomely for the "Prince's friends." He, indeed, pressed, it was thought rather with a want of dignity, for provision for too many of his followers. Lord Moira was in the Cabinet, and the Prince pushed the claim of his friend Erskine to the Chancellorship. It was certainly a most favourable state of things for his interests. He was also eager to see Mr. Tierney in the Speaker's chair.

But here, over the division of spoil, we trace the beginning of that coldness which reached to positive dislike between the Prince and Lord Grenville. This was mortifying, considering how recently had an alliance been cemented. Almost at once we find Lord Grenville speaking of his "most unreasonable demands." He particularly resisted the appointment of Mr. Calcraft, which he complained was pressed on him "in a mode amounting to persecution."* The Prince assured Romilly, through the mouth of Colonel MacMahon, that he had owed his appointment as Attorney-General to him, to his pressure on Lord Grenville and Mr. Fox. But the downfall of the ministry becomes the more remarkable from the change that was to take place in the Prince of Wales's opinions. The death of Fox had removed the last influence which had any positive control over him; though, as we have seen, he had long been already wavering. On the Catholic question his views seemed to have advanced from regarding it as "inopportune" to positive hostility. Here we can believe he was sincere.

When the "Talents" Ministry fell, to no one was the news more welcome than to the Prince of Wales. His high regard for Lord Grenville had passed away; and how bitter his feelings were

* "Court and Cabinets of George III." 17.

will be seen from the following manifesto, which he addressed to his friend Moira, and was of course intended to be shown :

THE PRINCE OF WALES TO LORD MOIRA.

“ Carlton House, March 30, 1807. .

“ MY DEAR FRIEND,

“ Although I think it perfectly beneath me to notice with any degree of personal anxiety the unfounded and calumnious reports, which, I have reason to believe, have been industriously propagated respecting my motives and purposes in the present important and unfortunate crisis, yet I think it fit to place in your hands, to be used at your discretion, the only notice or refutation of the misrepresentations I allude to, which I conceive it becomes my character and my sense of my own rectitude to give to anyone.

“ No one, my dear friend, knows better than yourself how much and how long I have been used to find myself the mark of the most false, contemptible, and, at the same time, the most malignant slanders ; nor how little disposition has ever been shown to feel for me, suffering under these attacks, or to afford me the redress which I could not but conceive myself entitled to. The motives upon which I have acted, and my future intentions, I will explain to you, my friend, in a very few sentences. From the hour of Fox's death—that friend towards whom and in whom my attachment was unbounded—it is known that my earnest wish was to retire from further concern and interference in public affairs ; still, however, I was induced (upon what grounds, what arguments, and what application is not now the question, but certainly upon no personal consideration) to continue my endeavours to give every countenance and assistance in my power to the new arrangements, and to persevere to place my trust in an administration still formed of men whom I respected and esteemed ; and this most sincere and warm disposition of my mind and views I communicated in a letter to Lord Howick, written a very short time after the death of my ever-to-be-lamented friend. From that period, I must declare to you with the frankness with which I have ever opened my mind to you, I have conceived myself to have experienced the most marked neglect (to use no stronger term) from the newly-constituted Administration ; having been, according to my own conception, neither consulted nor considered in any one important instance—a proceeding the more observed by me on account of the contrast it exhibited to the conduct of my dear friend Fox.

But of this I desire distinctly to observe that I am not now complaining, because the recollection of it has no influence whatever on my present decision, nor on the course I have thought it incumbent on me to adopt.

“For the same reason I waive entirely all observations, however painful I feel those which at this moment arise in my mind, upon the extraordinary condition in which I have been so long kept, while a victim to the most envenomed attacks of malice and falsehood, during the investigation commanded by his Majesty, respecting the conduct of the Princess of Wales; so far am I from blending any feelings (and I wish they may have been mistaken ones) which may have arisen in my breast during the discussion, with the present question. The only remark I shall make is, that I consider the last minute of the Cabinet on this subject as evincing the justice and decision of men of the highest honour, entertaining a due interest of my private character and public estimation.

“I am, at all events, incapable of allowing personal pique or disappointment, whether such opinions have been entertained through my own misapprehension or otherwise, to interfere with the great duties of my situation.

“On the subject which has occasioned the unfortunate and, I fear, irreconcilable difference between the late Ministers and my father, my opinion was ever known to themselves respecting the agitation of this question; yet neither was my advice asked when it might have been of use in the commencement of the discussion, nor my interposition desired when it might possibly have prevented an ultimate mischief. Ministers quitting office on this ground of dispute with the King, it was not possible for me to appear as the advocate and defender of the ground they had taken. I determined to resume my original purpose, sincerely prepared in my own mind on the death of poor Fox to cease to be a party man (although in alliance with him it had been the pride of my life to avow myself to be so), and to retire from taking any active line whatever, at least for the present, in political affairs.

“To this extent I deemed it my duty to communicate my resolution to the King, accompanied by such expressions of duty and affection to his person as I thought proper to use on the occasion. Whoever by insinuation or assertion has given a different turn, or ascribed a different motive, to the course I have adopted, and to the communication above referred to with his Majesty, has most ignorantly and presumptuously mis-stated the fact and misrepresented me.

“I have only to add, my dear friend, that you are too well

acquainted with my heart, and the steadiness of my attachments where I have once professed a friendship, not to be convinced that I continue to cherish strong sentiments of regard and esteem for many of the late ministers individually, and which I trust I shall never have any occasion to alter; and still more confident am I that it is not necessary for me to renew to you any declaration of those sentiments of unalterable affection and regard which never have yet been interrupted, and never can cease but with my life. I am, my dearest friend,

“Most affectionately yours,

“G. P.

“Earl of Moira, etc.”

Nothing could be more distinct. He had ceased to be “a party man.” No wonder it had evidently already gone about that the Prince had deserted his friends as well as his old principles.

This letter speaks for itself, and really amounted to a break off with the old Whigs, whom he so cordially disliked in the person of Lords Grey and Grenville. The paper was (as Mr. Moore tells us) written by Sheridan, and the arguments were, no doubt, found by him. He also shows that the key to the Prince's politics was henceforth to be found in men and “predilections.”

Lord Holland, too, confirms this change of opinions, and frankly owns that not the Prince but the party were to blame.

“Grey has, perhaps, neglected consulting persons somewhat too much. He wrote, however, at my request, to the Prince; and the Prince is in better humour than he was. Sheridan has been behaving strangely, and will, I fear, do much mischief. But considering his connections, talents, and appearance of steadiness to the mob and the public, I fear there is too much disposition to set him at defiance, and a greater desire to get rid of him altogether than is either prudent or perhaps right. It must be owned that the manners and tone of our Administration, amidst its many wise and liberal measures, contributed very sensibly to accelerate [its fall]. . . . The Prince of Wales, who had been active in the formation of it, was neglected, or thought himself so. Some symptoms of his ill-humour had transpired before I was in office. That circumstance was an additional motive with me for making his approbation a condition in my acceptance of the office. His letter to me on the occasion was more than gracious; it was kind and friendly. But though he approved my taking office, and expressed some goodwill to the Ministry, he distinctly disclaimed all connection with them, and

repeated above once his total indifference to politics since the death of Mr. Fox. . . . I paid my personal homage pretty constantly at Carlton House; but I never sought, or rather I avoided, being the channel of any intercourse between him and the Government. I believe I did wrong; I am sure I acted unwisely for the interests of the Administration. If I had been aware of Lord Moira's overstrained scruples, I should have recommended to my colleagues a more unreserved communication with Carlton House from motives of policy; but had I been apprised of the degree to which the Prince had been consulted, not only on the formation but on the principles of the Ministry, I should have thought every member of it bound to concert with him certain public measures more fully than they did. . . . Truth compels me to acknowledge that he had some reason to complain of the Ministers, and that their impartial historian has yet more reason to lament their impolicy in neglecting him."

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

1807—1808.

ON the fall of the "Talents," fortune again favoured the Princess by bringing into high office her trusty champion, Mr. Perceval. Had she shown common discretion; her position would have been unassailable, for she had with her the Ministry, the King, and the public. Unfortunately, as if grown reckless, and after having so narrowly escaped a great peril, she seems to have set out on a new and erratic course, lamentably distinguished by an utter absence of caution or prudence.

Since the investigation she had attracted but little attention. She lived at Kensington Palace, where she held a sort of court, and was duly attended by the Tory nobility, who, knowing that the King was on her side, made it a point to pay their respects. Among them were the Dukes of Beaufort and Rutland, Lords Harrowby and Eldon, Mr. Perceval, and others.

There could be no doubt that the influence of the good old monarch contributed to hold all parties in check, and that the Princess herself was thus restrained from imprudent proceedings. She lived in good state at her palace, keeping also her villa at Blackheath, to which she would make excursions and bring friends to dine. She was seen at fashionable routs and parties—a strange-looking personage at times. At a ball at Mr. Hope's, of "Anastasius" celebrity, she danced. "Such an exhibition," says Miss Berry, who was presented to her that night; "but that she did not at all feel for herself she should have felt for her. Such an overdressed, bare-bosomed, painted-eyebrowed figure, one never saw." But allowance should have been made for the consciousness of her false position, hunted and harassed and watched.

"Although," says one of her observers in a graphic passage, "during the last year of her life she was bloated and disfigured by sorrow and by the life she led, the Princess was in her early youth a pretty woman: fine light hair—very delicately formed features, and a fine complexion—quick, glancing, penetrating eyes, long cut and rather sunk in the head, which gave them much expression—and a remarkably delicately formed mouth; but her head was always too large for her body, and her neck too short; and latterly, her whole figure was like a ball, and her countenance became hardened, and an expression of defiance and boldness took possession of it, that was very unpleasant. Nevertheless, when she chose to assume it, she had a very noble air."

She had, however, friends that were really respectable, such as Lady Anne Hamilton and Mrs. Damer. But these were gradually supplanted by a "set" of persons whose characters were marked by instability and lightness, even eccentricity. Among these were the gay and airy Lady Charlotte, a *passée* beauty whose head was turned by vanity and admiration; Lady Caroline Lamb; Lord Abercorn, the odd nobleman who slept in black satin sheets; the volatile "Monk" Lewis; the singular Ward; Lady Oxford, whose name was "in the papers;" and the lively Charles Kirkpatrick Sharpe, with many more.

"Her conversation," says Miss Berry, "is certainly uncommonly lively, odd, and clever. What a pity that she has not a grain of common sense, not an ounce of ballast to prevent high spirits and a coarse mind running away with her, and allowing her to act indecorously and ridiculously whenever an occasion offers." These words describe her accurately. On these occasions she had with her the boy "Billy Austin," who had been the cause of such troubles, and whom she ought to have sent to school. But there was a merit in the constancy with which she clung to those whom she had once taken up. She was fond of wild and indiscreet pranks, such as going to masquerades incognita.

She was at this time completely under the influence of some Italian singers named Sapia; the result of which was that no really steady persons could continue long in her establishment.

"The Princess," says her friend, "is always seeking amusement, and unfortunately, often at the expense of prudence and propriety. She cannot endure a dull person; she has often said to me: 'I can forgive any fault but that.' And the anathema she frequently pronounces upon such persons is: 'Mine God! dat is the dullest person God Almighty ever did born!'"

But all this was really a foolishly assumed exultation to cover her woes, and the unhappy lady was seeking such excitement to

forget her trials. By 1813 she had ruefully owned to a friend that her situation was hopeless, and that there was no issue save the death of one of the two. This issue she used openly to discuss and long for and anticipate. "After dinner," says her attendant, "her Royal Highness made a wax figure as usual, and gave it an amiable addition of large horns; then took three pins out of her garment and stuck them through and through, and put the figure to roast and melt at the fire. What a silly piece of spite! Yet it is impossible not to laugh when one sees it done."

One of her ladies reported her eagerly coming in with one of Mr. Burke's works in her hand. "Read it," she said, "he has drawn the Prince's character exactly." The passage ran: "A man without any sense of duty as a prince, without any regard to the dignity of his crown, and without any love to his people; dissolute, false, venal, destitute of any positive good qualities whatever, except a pleasant temper and the manners of a gentleman." This was told everywhere—a lamentable indiscretion, to say the least.

Passages in her letters show a lively wit and observation. Thus: "Lord Deerhurst is quite a joke to the secret marriage of the *ci-devant* Mrs. Panton with a Mr. Geldi, and why it is kept a secret, and why it is made public, nobody can guess, as she was her own mistress—or that she thought that she was public property, and that it would be essential to have an Act of Parliament to make an enclosure to become private property at a moment's warning."

It is remarkable, and perplexing too, that she should have attached to her interests two men of remarkable ability and character, whose support through the troubles that followed were of incalculable advantage—Mr. Canning and Mr. Brougham. The former has been believed to enjoy a particular partiality, and his extraordinary devotion to her at a later crisis, almost to the imperilling of his interests, was remarkable, so that, as Lord Campbell tells us in one of his piquant narratives, "the Regent condescended to be jealous of him." That she should have carried on the struggle for the next eight years that followed, without Mr. Brougham's aid, seems unlikely, for though she had many champions as ardent she had none so powerful and sagacious. It was in 1809 that he began to resort to her house. He had for several years previously avoided being presented to her—not wishing, he said, to be mixed up in her quarrel—and was presented to her by Canning.

According to the same authority Mr. Brougham recommended himself highly to her by his sympathy and agreeable manners, and

secured a promise that he should be her future Attorney-General. He himself affects to say he was drawn to her home by the pleasant society found there, and the chance offered of meeting Mr. Canning, Rogers, and others. He noticed that she always spoke of Lord Eldon and Mr. Perceval, though they had abandoned her. Lord Grey and the Whigs keeping away, the popular barrister felt that here was an opening for his fortunes, not to come for him under the existing administration, and, considering the condition of the Liberals, not be looked for until years had gone by. He also contrived to win the confidence of her daughter, in whose presence he was kindly welcomed as the greatest lawyer of the day, and she was taught to look on him with kindness as the friend and adviser of her mother. Lord Campbell declares that he was founding hopes upon the failing health of the Regent, as of the reigning King. This might seem uncomplimentary to the Queen's new champion, save for its being notorious that Brougham was thoroughly *chauvin*.

At this time also we begin to have some pleasing glimpses of her daughter, the engaging young Princess Charlotte, now a little girl some ten years old. The Prince at this moment was laudably solicitous as to her education, and the following letters show him moderate and temperate in reference to the proceedings of the Princess of Wales :

THE PRINCE OF WALES TO LADY DE CLIFFORD.

"Carlton House, Saturday night, Nov. 21st, 1807.

"MY DEAR LADY DE CLIFFORD,

"I have only this moment learnt from Lady Haggerston that Lady Albemarle is safely delivered of a son. Pray accept my sincere congratulations on this event, as I do assure you that no one can participate more truly in everything that interests you than

"Your very affectionate Friend,

"GEORGE P.

"P.S.—I hope the little lady and the new-comer are both quite well. I have ordered them to be inquired after to-morrow morning, for I only heard of the circumstance too late this evening to send sooner."

THE PRINCE OF WALES TO LADY DE CLIFFORD.

"Carlton House, Tuesday night, April 19th, 1808.

"MY DEAR LADY DE CLIFFORD,

"I am much obliged to you for the communication you were so good as to make me respecting the notification you

received from the Princess of Wales. You not only have acted up to the sacred trust imposed upon you by your office in acquainting me immediately with the circumstance, but you have shown your usual excellent judgment and good taste, as well in your way of meeting the message, as in signifying to me the proposed visit, without any comment. Indeed, it was impossible for you not to know how I must regard it when you notice the date of this letter, and the time at which you receive it. You will comprehend that I did not wish to explain my sentiments more fully to you till the visit was actually over, lest the Princess should put any question to you, and that thereby you should be subjected to embarrassment by the answer you would have been forced to give. The step having been taken by the Princess, it was my wish that the visit should not be interrupted, that nothing might appear discordant to the polite attention always to be observed; though I might have my suspicion that the visit was not really made from a misconstruction of the licence I had granted in a special instance, but was an attempt to pass beyond the line established by me through the King. In the regulation laid down, and transmitted by his Majesty to the Princess, it is precisely defined that she is not to visit her daughter at Warwick House, that house being considered as part of Carlton House. Charlotte's illness, which prevented her from going to her mother at Blackheath, was a case not foreseen, and was sufficient reason for relaxation in this particular instance. But as my daughter has been for some time able to go about again, that pretext must no longer remain, and I cannot assent to the Princess visiting at Warwick House on any other grounds. Her apartments not being ready at Kensington can be no excuse whatever. Should you have any apprehension of a visit hereafter, I must request of you, my dear Lady de Clifford, immediately to ask for an audience of the Princess at Blackheath, when, with all that respectful delicacy which nobody knows so well as yourself how to testify, you will explain to the Princess the line herein enjoined you, and will entreat her not to come to Warwick House, which she cannot do without my previous assent, and which can only be given on some consideration as strong as what lately induced me to grant it. According to the existing regulation, Charlotte may always (in moderation) be sent for by her mother to Blackheath or Kensington, under the limitation of its not giving any peculiar interruption to her studies or the necessary train of her education.

"I remain, my dear Lady de Clifford, with the greatest truth,
ever your sincere friend,

"GEORGE P."

Here is a natural pleasing letter of the young Princess's, unpublished hitherto.*

“January 28th, 1808.

“MY DEAR MR. CONWAY,

“As I find you admired Mrs. Udney's snuffbox, though I should not think of making you so shabby a present, I hope you will not look to the intrinsic value of it, but receive it as a mark of the sincere regard of

“Your ever affectionate

“CHARLOTTE.

“P.S.—Perhaps you will deign to acknowledge this in person, as I find you require some bribe to come to Warwick House; and now the bust is done there is little hope of the favour of seeing you, but by some similar motive. My dear friend Mrs. U. begs her kind compliments.”

The creditors of the Princess of Wales assembled on the 17th July, in consequence of an intimation to them that Mr. Adam, the Prince's chancellor, would attend, when the plan which the Prince had adopted to pay their debts, and secure them in future, would be laid before them.

“Mr. Adam then stated that the Prince's treasurer had uniformly and regularly every quarter paid the allowance of £12,000 a-year to the officers of her royal highness; that this had never been in arrear one instant from 1802 to the present time; that Mr. Gray (who was present) was the person who paid it; that the Prince had always paid this sum to the Princess without deducting the income-tax, although there was £12,000 per annum deducted from him at the Exchequer on that account. That his royal highness had now increased the Princess's income to £17,000 a-year, to be paid quarterly, without deducting the income-tax. That the Princess was paid for personal expenses at the Exchequer £5000 a-year, making in all an income of £22,000. Unless the Prince had spontaneously undertaken for the arrangement of their debts, the creditors would have had no redress. In doing this, the Prince stipulated that he should be fully indemnified against future demands, a claim which his royal highness was justified in making, because, to the £41,000 there was to be added the sum of £34,000 which the Princess had received from his Majesty's Droits of Admiralty, making together £75,000 of debt contracted by her royal highness; which, divided on the number of years, exceeded by many thousand pounds a

* MSS., Brit. Mus.

year the greatest income ever proposed for her royal highness; that after the payment of £41,000 had been undertaken by the Prince, and guarantee against future demands arranged to his satisfaction, Mr. Adams said that towards the conclusion of the business it was stated to him by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, to be by him (Mr. Adam) laid before the Prince, that the debt was £8000 more than the £41,000. On this the Prince gave his commands to Mr. Adam to represent to the King's confidential servants, that the main and principal object which had uniformly directed his royal highness's determination, and which he had never for a moment lost sight of in any one part of this transaction, had been to prevent (in these times of great and necessary expenditure) any debt of his own, or any other for which he might be considered liable, becoming either directly or circuitously a burden upon the country. That he had been likewise greatly influenced by the desire of seeing justice done to the creditors of the Princess, although under no legal obligation whatever to pay those debts. On these grounds the Prince of Wales gave it to be understood to those of his majesty's ministers concerned in the transaction, that his royal highness would spontaneously take upon himself the payment of the sum of £8000 in addition to the rest."

END OF VOL. I.



